TOWARD THE NONVIOLENT RESOLUTION OF RACIAL CONFLICT.

Edward Jackson 1968

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TOWARD THE NONVIOLENT RESOLUTION OF RACIAL CONFLICT

by

Edward Robert Jackson

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the Department of Political Science
in the Graduate College of
The University of Iowa

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PREFACE

The mention of names of certain American cities such as Selma, Birmingham, Jackson, and Little Rock brings to mind the repulsive picture of violent racial conflict. These and other American cities both North and South are possessed with histories of such violent conflicts. Fortunately, not all community leaders resort to violence as a means of changing or maintaining the status quo in race relations.

American communities which have histories of racial discrimination can be placed into three general categories. Into the first would be placed those communities in which the Negro has not been satisfied with his status and has attempted to bring about desired changes, but in which the white members have refused to accept the proposed changes and as a result violence has occurred. The second category would constitute those communities in which the Negro has not been satisfied with his status but in which, because of fear of the possible consequences of demands for change, he has not attempted to bring about change. The third category would constitute those communities in which the Negro has been unhappy with his status and has attempted to bring about changes and in which the white members have been

willing to accept, to some degree, the proposals for change in order to avoid open racial conflict. While this category may not include a majority of American communities in which racial discrimination exists it does include several cities. This fact is sufficient to warrant investigation.

This study will be concerned with the last category. Scholars as well as newsmen have provided many data on those communities with histories of violent racial conflict. However, there appears to be a lack of information on those communities which have been able to avoid such conflict while simultaneously making progress in solving existing racial problems. Recognizing this lack of information this study will focus on one community--Bayou City, Deep South State--which has attempted to avoid racial strife while still making progress toward racial justice. Bayou City, a city of approximately 65,000 inhabitants, is not from the Negro's point of view an ideal community in which to reside. There are many problems that remain unsolved--school desegregation, job discrimination, housing problems, and others. It is, however, neither a Selma nor a Birmingham; it is a community in which local leaders have made a concerted effort to maintain peaceful relations between the races. To be sure, racial incidents have occurred but few cities, particularly within the South, with a mixed

racial population can boast of a history completely void of racial incidents. However, Bayou City has not had open racial conflict such as occurred in many cities throughout the United States.

This study will be primarily concerned with the ways in which Bayou City's leaders have managed to make progress in civil rights while still avoiding open racial conflict. In the process of attempting to explain the ways in which progress has been achieved attention will be given to several relevant questions. Who are the civil rights leaders in Bayou City? What are their qualities? Are there any common features among these leaders? How much intergroup communication exists in Bayou City? Do public officials perceive civil rights problems in the same manner as Negro community leaders? If so, do the two groups of leaders similarly perceive the solutions to these problems? How do the two communities communicate with each other? Are Negro community leaders involved in any way in the civil rights decision-making process? To what extent do civil rights decisions result from negotiation and compromise on the part of the various groups involved? What tools or weapons are available to Negro and white leaders engaged in the bargaining process? Because of the overriding significance of the Catholic Church in this geographical area, an attempt will be made to examine the role of this

institution in the area of civil rights. In short, what are the characteristics of people and race relations in Bayou City that set this community off from the surrounding area?

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INTRODUCTION

The major problem to be investigated in this study is the identification of the elements within a community that contribute to the avoidance of open racial conflict and facilitate working towards the goal of racial equality. Let it be stated at the beginning that there is no "one" way to achieve this partially utopian situation. Some would argue that it is impossible to achieve such a condition--that it is impossible for Negroes to make meaningful advances in civil rights in a non-violent manner. One of the basic assumptions in this study is that it is both possible and advantageous to both the Negro and white communities to make efforts at establishing an environment in which relations between the races can occur in a non-violent manner.

If the assumption that it is possible for the Negro minority to achieve progress without recourse to violence by either community is valid, what factors or conditions must or should exist in the community? Before answering this question, it must be shown that meaningful progress has been achieved in Bayou City without the occurrence of racial violence. Although the advances achieved in civil rights in Bayou City do not equal those in many northern

communities of the nation, those achieved in Bayou City greatly outnumber those of most other communities in Deep South State. More changes in the traditional pattern of race relations in Bayou City have been achieved peacefully than most communities in this southern state. To use one illustration, the people of this southern community accepted without violence and without recourse to court action all of the provisions of Title II of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Literally overnight, Negroes were able to enjoy opportunities that previously were not available. For some business places the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was not even necessary because they were desegregated before 1964. Certainly this situation did not exist in most communities in Deep South State. In many cities, the changes ordered by the Civil Rights Act of 1964 were strongly resisted and brought few changes. Owners of public places still refused to admit or serve Negroes, and few Negroes were willing to initiate legal action against these owners. Even at the present time, communities within twenty-five miles of Bayou City have been little affected by the civil rights statutes passed by the Congress.

Other illustrations can be cited. A Negro child in Bayou City can, if he wishes, obtain an integrated primary, secondary, and college education. While a similar education is legally available to Negro children in other nearby cities, it is more difficult to obtain. In other words,

school officials in nearby cities are more reluctant to comply with school desegregation orders than officials in Bayou City. There is also less housing discrimination in Bayou City. Many more integrated neighborhoods exist than in other nearby communities. For example, in this writer's home-town, located only eighteen miles from Bayou City, integrated neighborhoods are almost nonexistent while similar neighborhoods are very common in Bayou City. More and better jobs are also available in Bayou City than in most nearby cities. Negroes are employed in respectable positions in many of the major businesses such as clothing retailers. Similar positions are not as abundant in neighbor cities. In short, Bayou City is somewhat unique with regards to civil rights when compared to most other communities in Deep South State and many communities in the South.

It is the purpose of this study to identify and explain some of the factors that differentiate this community from others in Deep South State. It is hypothesized that the existence of the following factors contributes to the nonviolent resolution of racial conflict and that these factors exist in the community being studied.

1. The minority community must have a recognizable leadership group.

2. This leadership group should be relatively small and highly unified.

3. The minority leadership group should have a strong association with the local minority population.

4. The minority leadership group should be alert and informed of the civil rights movement in other parts of the United States.

5. There should be consistency in leadership.

6. There should be organizations through which the minority leadership can function.

7. Communication channels should exist in the community.

8. The major communication channel should be a third powerful neutral party.

9. The minority leadership must be willing to employ a variety of techniques in attacking problems.

10. The minority leadership group must perform some role in the civil rights decision-making process.

11. The role of the minority leadership group in the civil rights decision-making process should be formalized.

It is further hypothesized that the greater the number of the above factors in existence the more likely progress in civil rights will be achieved without recourse to violence. In the following pages an attempt will be made to explain why these particular factors were selected for investigation.

Most of the factors hypothesized to affect the non-violent resolution of racial conflict relate directly to the Negro leadership, for it is upon this group more than any other that the burden of initiative rests. It is

extremely rare for the white segment of any southern community to take the initiative in correcting economic and political wrongs which have existed for decades. This is a responsibility which invariably must be assumed by the Negro minority. This group should possess certain features and undertake certain actions if it is to aid in the final realization of racial justice.

First, there must be a recognizable leadership group within the Negro community. The group must be easily observable by those who possess power in the local community. Without this leadership group any efforts which may be undertaken by the Negro masses (although it is very doubtful that such efforts would be made in the absence of a leadership group) probably would be futile.

Secondly, this group preferably should be relatively small--perhaps as small as one or two individuals. As William Peters points out, the success of the Montgomery bus boycott and the trend that began as a result of that incident resulted in part from the single leadership of Martin Luther King, Jr. The writer asserts that "without Dr. King and his dynamic leadership, his emotional maturity and his spiritual commitment to non-violence, the movement would have been a quite different thing from

what it was."[1] Prior to the boycott, the problem with the Negro community in Montgomery had not been the lack of leadership but the over-abundance of leadership. There were many civil rights organizations--each with its own leader(s)--and consequently the leadership group was large and dispersed. Wrote King:

> First, there was an appalling lack of unity among the leaders. Several civic groups existed, each at loggerheads with the other. There was the organization known as the Progressive Democrats headed by E. D. Nixon. There was the Citizens Committee headed by Rufus Lewis. There was the Women's Political Council headed by Mrs. Mary Fair Burks and Jo Ann Robinson. There was the NAACP headed by R. L. Matthews. Smaller groups further divided the Negro community. While the heads of each of these organizations were able and dedicated leaders with common aims, their separate allegiances made it difficult for them to come together on the basis of a higher unity. . . .[2]

The existence of such a situation can only lead to confusion, ineffectiveness and group in-fighting. In short, the over-abundance of leaders who lack unity is self-defeating. This is not to suggest that some degree of difference is harmful. On the contrary, discussion of various approaches (means) for the accomplishment of certain goals (immediate or eventual ends) is quite useful. The important point, however, is that the leaders agree on some

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[1]William Peters, The Southern Temper (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1958), p. 180.

[2]Ibid., p. 181.

approach and put their full support behind the group. In Montgomery this was best achieved under the direction of Dr. King; in other communities leadership may be best provided by a unified group of individuals.

The third factor hypothesized to contribute to the nonviolent resolution of racial conflict is that the Negro leadership be primarily local. A strong association with the local population can be obtained in several ways--by being from the area (born in or near the community) or by having spent a significant portion of one's life in the area. Regardless of how this association with the local population is achieved, it is of some value to the local leadership group in order to avoid the accusation of "outside agitators" leveled by white public officials against Negro leaders who are not identified with the local population. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and other national civil rights leaders, for example, are often termed "outside agitators" by white officials when these leaders travel to various communities to organize some form of protest against discrimination. The accusation itself is not as important as its consequences; such accusations frequently imply that the local Negro population is not in sympathy with the goals of the "agitators" and that there is no compelling reason why the leaders of the larger community should act. These charges are an attempt to deprive the

local civil rights movement of whatever legitimacy it might have normally possessed.

It must be recognized that in many communities it would not be of great importance if the leadership was primarily local or made up entirely of outside elements. In communities where local customs are entirely against equal rights for Negroes, the local civil rights movement probably could not hope to acquire legitimacy under any guise. In other communities, however, it may be quite crucial whether or not the leaders of the larger community are confronted by local Negro leaders or leaders from distant communities.

The fourth factor thought to promote the nonviolent resolution of racial conflict is the degree to which the Negro leadership is alert and informed of the civil rights movement in other localities and in the nation as a whole. Much of the success of any campaign to make advances in civil rights depends upon the choice of techniques (or strategies) and the implementation of that choice to accomplish a defined goal. This makes desirable knowledge of how certain techniques have been employed in other communities and of what techniques are most useful for certain problems. Many difficulties involved in civil rights campaign strategy must be solved in advance of any action. Even for a simple "march," leaders have to determine as

precisely as possible who will participate, how the local authorities can be expected to react to the march, whether sufficient money exists to bail the marchers out of jail if they are arrested, whether the march is the appropriate technique for the defined goal, how marches have worked in other parts of the South, and whether the goal is important enough for the risks involved. These are only some of the many problems and questions which must be confronted by local leaders. Knowledge of civil rights campaigns in other sections of the nation obviously will not guarantee success, but it is likely to be valuable in improving the decision-making capabilities of a leader.

The fifth factor that contributes to the peaceful resolution of racial conflict is consistency of leadership. Leadership in civil rights often has been a "one-shot" affair. A leadership emerges for the sole purpose of accomplishing one limited goal and then dissolves before attacking other problems of racial discrimination. This has been characteristic of much of the conduct of civil rights campaigns in those areas of the South familiar to this writer. It is hypothesized that effective leadership is best established and maintained when there is one leadership group in existence over an extended period of time and when this group concerns itself with a variety of problems related to racial justice. Consistency in leadership is important not only for the purpose of having

the leadership known to the power wielders in the community but also for the purpose of maintaining influence within the Negro community.

The existence of organizations through which the leadership can function is also hypothesized to aid in the peaceful resolution of conflict. In addition to having general support from the masses, effectiveness of the leadership is more readily realized when that group has at its disposal an organization which can implement the policies of the leaders. The tangible (for example, finances) and the intangible (for example, moral support) benefits of having such an organization can be most useful to a leader or group of leaders who are contemplating an attack on a specific problem in the local community. As will be demonstrated in a later section of this study, the existence of several organizations, particularly the Southern Consumers' Cooperative, has provided invaluable aid to the various leaders in this southern community.

Another significant factor thought to aid in the nonviolent resolution of racial conflict is the willingness of the Negro leadership to use a variety of techniques in attacking problems of racial discrimination. Paradoxically, the most important of these techniques is "violence." Only if the Negro is willing ultimately to risk his personal safety will his demands have a possibility of being observed. This is not to say that in any bargaining

situation the white power holders will concede certain things as soon as the Negro threatens violence, but if the Negro is not willing to employ this weapon his demands are more likely to go unnoticed. The threat of violence (and in some rare instances the actual use of violence) is as useful a technique under certain conditions as is the boycott or march under other conditions. This point, long recognized by Negroes who have been involved in civil rights efforts, was emphasized after one national survey of Negroes and Negro leaders conducted by William Brink and Louis Harris. They stated, "[t]hroughout the civil-rights struggle the Negro leaders have been dedicated to nonviolence, but clearly a sizeable number of their followers, roughly five million, are resigned to the possibility that they may have to fight their way to freedom."[3]

Of course, on a national scale such violence would be disasterous. But on a local scale, violence might be very effective. Consider the following description by two writers of the results of violence in one southern community:

> But it was this violence which provided the impetus for a long process of communication and negotiation. While the Negro demonstrators did not gain an immediate victory, they demonstrated their ability to invoke the sanctions of

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[3]William Brink and Louis Harris, The Negro Revolution in America (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1964), p. 73.

> notoriety upon the community, as national newspapers, radio and television broadcast descriptions of mob violence on the city's main streets. A group of economically powerful white leaders became convinced that this sort of notoriety could be extremely harmful to the city's industrial growth, as the experience of Little Rock had demonstrated. They were also convinced that the Negro community had the power to bring this sort of bad publicity to the city again. . . . In this episode of conflict, these white leaders saw that militant Negroes could be subdued by force but only at a price they did not care to pay.[4]

It is clear from this account that, at least in some cases, the threat of or actual use of violence can be beneficial to the Negro cause. It is possible that at this time in history the actual use of violence is not as necessary as it was five or ten years ago; southern whites who previously did not believe Negroes would use violence no longer have to be convinced that Negroes are capable of using force if necessary to make progress in civil rights. These white leaders have observed other southern communities torn by racial strife. While this probably has not made southern whites any more liberal in their attitude toward racial justice, it has made some white leaders realize that some concessions are necessary and that in the interest of the community it would be better to make these limited concessions over the conference table than in the streets. From

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[4]Lewis Killian and Charles Grigg, Racial Crisis in America (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), p. 137.

the standpoint of the Negro the riots across the nation during the summer months of 1967 had a healthy effect upon the community being studied in this project. The white leaders interviewed expressed a fear that this could happen in Bayou City. At the same time they expressed the desire not to have their community torn by fighting in the streets. In short, they recognized peaceful negotiation as a source of benefits.

Thus far, attention has been devoted to the factors associated with the Negro leadership. But the total community possesses other characteristics which should exist if it is to make strides toward the achievement of racial justice in a nonviolent manner. The eighth factor hypothesized to influence the nonviolent resolution of racial conflict is the presence of communication channels, whether formal or informal in character. It is important to have an established procedure by which the Negro masses, speaking through their leaders, can express views to the leaders of the larger community and also observe official reaction to their demands. It has not been unusual in the past for Negro leaders to present legitimate demands only to discover later that nothing had been done about them.

These channels are also important as means by which the officials in a community can observe the temperament of the Negro community, the degree to which the Negro

community is disturbed over particular problems and whether or not that community is likely to resort to violence to achieve its demands. It is very possible that without communication links one community could resort to action under the mistaken impression that the circumstances dictated such action. The presence of communication links can lessen the possibility of such accidents.

In addition to the above mentioned advantages, communication links also can do much in the way of dispelling stereotypes one community may have of the other community. Communication links can often be organizations which bring Negro and white leaders together in personal confrontations. Such confrontation has proven effective in disproving certain beliefs about both Negro and whites. As Louis Killian points out:

> In a conflict relationship, moreover, stereotypes can be broken down through personal confrontation. Comments of members of these two leadership groups indicate that they have come to perceive previously unnoticed differences in members of the opposite group. They have developed an awareness of the structural restrictions upon the behavior of each side, so that neither appears quite as unreasonable as before. And even in concentrating on their points of disagreement, they have found areas of agreement and likeness.[5]

Another factor hypothesized to contribute to the peaceful resolution of racial conflict is that this

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[5] Ibid., p. 140.

communication link should be provided by a third powerful neutral party. The neutrality of this third party does not mean that the party has no interest in the outcome of the total bargaining process. It does mean that the third party should be sufficiently neutral to be acceptable to both sides of the dispute. This third party would listen to the demands of the Negro leaders and then the objections of the white officials and, on the basis of these, construct some compromise which might be acceptable to both groups. In short, the third party would act as a compromising or moderating agent in the dispute. It would invite the disputants to engage in discussion and encourage moderation in their demands and objections. Because of the great importance of the Catholic Church in this geographical area, it is hypothesized that this role of a third powerful neutral party will be performed by the Catholic Church.

The involvement of Negro leaders in the civil rights decision-making process is an additional factor hypothesized to contribute to the peaceful resolution of racial conflict. Involvement in the decision-making process does not necessarily mean the actual possession of decision-making authority by Negro leaders. It refers instead to Negro participation in some stage of the process. More than likely this would be at the initiation stage--proposing certain policies to the decision makers and

possibly applying pressure (utilization of whatever resources available) to encourage decision makers to decide in a manner favorable to the Negro minority.

The final factor thought to contribute to the peaceful resolution of racial conflict is the formalization of the involvement in the civil rights decision-making process by Negro leaders. Realistically speaking, this is perhaps the most unlikely requirement to be realized in most southern communities. At the same time, however, it is the one requirement that would likely do much to promote the nonviolent settlement of racial disputes. To have elements of the Negro leadership consulted as a matter of policy in all decisions relating directly to civil rights in the local community probably would do much in aiding the peaceful resolution of racial disputes.

Research Design

During the summer months of 1967, community leaders in Bayou City were selected and interviewed in an effort to determine whether the factors which were hypothesized aided in the peaceful resolution of racial conflict. Three basic methods by which community leaders are identified were combined to select leaders in this southern community. The first is the positional approach by which researchers utilize stated criteria in determining community leaders. Persons using this approach assume that there is a high

correlation between community leadership and occupation of certain key positions such as owners of large business firms or officials in certain organizations which have a particular interest in certain types of community problems. An excellent example of the use of this approach is the study of Middletown conducted by Helen and Robert Lynd.[6]

The second approach employed is the reputational approach by which scholars allow "knowledgeable" persons (sometimes referred to as "judges") within the community to select that community's leaders. One of the best known studies employing this approach is Floyd Hunter's study of Regional City.[7] This approach, while praised by some,[8] has been criticized by several scholars, notably Robert Dahl, Nelson Polsby and Raymond Wolfinger.[9]

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[6]Helen Lynd and Robert Lynd, Middletown in Transition (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1937).

[7]Floyd Hunter, Community Power Structure: A Study of Decision Makers (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1953).

[8]See, for example, W. V. D'Antonio and E. C. Erickson, "The Reputational Technique as a Measure of Community Power," American Sociological Review (June, 1962), pp. 362-376.

[9]Robert Dahl, "Critique of the Ruling Elite Model," American Political Science Review, 52 (June, 1958), pp. 463-469. Nelson Polsby, "The Sociology of Community Power: A Reassessment," Social Forces, 37 (March, 1959), pp. 232-236. Raymond Wolfinger, "Reputation and Reality in the Study of Community Power," American Sociological Review, 25 (October, 1960), pp. 636-644.

The third approach, the decisional or decision-making approach, enables persons to view community leaders as those individuals who are involved in the actual decision-making process. The best known study employing this approach is Robert Dahl's study of New Haven, Connecticut.[10]

It is most difficult to say which of the approaches will identify the actual leaders in any community.[11] One scholar found that two of the approaches (reputational and decision-making) produced similar lists of community leaders in the community studied. He concluded that "there is considerable overlap in the results produced by our two measures of power in Mapletown and West Valley and in that sense leadership may be said to be homogeneous: reputation and action join. We don't find the sharp distinction between them which some writers have predicted would exist. . . ."[12]

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[10]Robert Dahl, Who Governs: Democracy and Power in an American City (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963).

[11]For a discussion of the merits and shortcomings of the various approaches see Sethard Fisher, "Community Power Studies: A Critique," Social Research (Winter, 1962), pp. 449-466. See also Nelson Polsby, Community Power and Political Theory (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963).

[12]L. V. Blankenship, "Community Power and Decision-Making: A Comparative Evaluation of Measurement Techniques," Social Forces (December, 1964), p. 216.

To circumvent some of the possible shortcomings of the three approaches, this study will employ a combination of techniques which are associated with all three of the above approaches. By no means is this construction intended to be the panacea of selecting community leaders. The only intention is to utilize what appears to be the most valid and practical method of selecting civil rights leaders in this Southern community.

Comparative Techniques in the Selection of Leaders

Because there are several studies of Negro leadership which are pertinent to this study it may be helpful to briefly review the methods employed in these studies for the selection of leaders. These studies include M. Eliane Burgess's Negro Leadership in a Southern City, Floyd Hunter's Community Power Structure: A Study of Decision Makers, Ernest Barth and Baba Abu-Laban's Power Structure and the Negro Sub-Community, Harold W. Pfautz's The Power Structure of the Negro Sub-Community: A Case Study and a Comparative View, and Daniel C. Thompson's The Negro Leadership Class.

In Professor Burgess's study of Crescent City, Negro leaders were determined by the outcome of polls taken from three groups of individuals--potential Negro leaders, a sample of the Negro community, and white community leaders. The list of potential Negro leaders to be polled was

acquired by first contacting "experts"--that is, "individuals of considerable experience in the field of investigation."[13] These individuals were asked to name "key informants" who in turn were asked to name the fifteen top leaders in the community. Individuals who received at least two nominations by the key informants were asked to add names which had possibly been omitted.

A second poll was taken from a stratified sample of Crescent City's Negro population. Each respondent was asked to list five Negroes whom he considered the most influential. And finally a third group--white community leaders--was asked to nominate Negroes whom they thought were the most influential. The white leaders themselves were selected by "an abbreviated form of the chain-referral technique for identifying leaders."[14] Professor Burgess then simply moved from leader to leader as each was mentioned by others.[15]

In his study of Regional City, Floyd Hunter employed a somewhat similar technique to Burgess--similar in that both relied upon attributed influence by knowledgeable individuals within the community. The first list (four

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[13]M. Elaine Burgess, Negro Leadership in a Southern Community (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1960), p. 211.

[14]Ibid., p. 92.

[15]Ibid., p. 93.

separate lists) of potential leaders was obtained from four different sources.

> The Community Council in Regional City, a council of civic organizations, provided preliminary lists of leaders in community affairs. The Chamber of Commerce provided business leaders of establishments employing more than 500 employees and of financial houses doing the largest volume of clearances. The League of Women Voters provided lists of local political leaders who had at least major governmental committee chairmanship status. Newspaper editors and other civic leaders provided lists of society leaders and leaders of wealth.[16]

For the study of the leaders of the entire community fourteen judges were used "to give their opinions on who were the top leaders on each of the lists thus provided."[17] For the Negro sub-community seven Negro judges were used to "give a basic list of leaders who might be questioned on leadership patterns."[18]

Ernest Barth and Baha Abu-Laban, in their study of Pacific City--a study designed to replicate Hunter's Regional City Study--employed techniques quite similar to those of Hunter. Their first list of potential influentials was acquired from several sources: some from the list of names of people who had held office in major Negro organizations; some from interviews with Negro informants; and some

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[16]Floyd Hunter, Community Power Structure (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1953), pp. 268-269.

[17]Ibid., p. 269.

[18]Ibid., p. 114.

from the local Negro newspaper. This list was then given to a panel of ten Negro "respondents,"[19] who were asked to add some names of others whom they believed to have been omitted. In addition, each member of the panel was asked to select from the list of names ten people he would choose "to help in a major project requiring a decision by a group of sub-community leaders."[20]

The names of those individuals who received at least three votes were then placed on a second list and this was then given to another panel of six Negro "informants" who, in turn, were asked to rate the potential leaders.

Harold Pfautz in his study of Providence, Rhode Island, also relied upon attributed influence by knowledgeable individuals within the community. As with the other writers mentioned, however, his method for acquiring the first list of potential influentials was somewhat different. The first list was acquired from several sources including "local clergymen, business and professional men, as well as a newspaper clipping scrapbook maintained by the local

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[19]It is not clear whether the authors intended to mean "judges" although their function appears to have been the same as the judges in Hunter's study. See Ernest Barth and Baha Abu-Laban, "Power Structure and the Negro Sub-Community," American Sociological Review, 24 (February, 1959), p. 71.

[20]Ibid.

Urban League."[21] Those persons receiving at least three mentions were interviewed immediately. Similar to Burgess, Pfautz also employed the chain-referral or "snowball" technique in interviewing individuals on the first list. These persons were asked:

> If you were requested to choose a committee of ten Negro leaders in Providence (either men or women) who together would formulate a general policy affecting the Negro community as a whole, and you wanted to choose those individuals who, if they were to express their approval of a particular policy, would influence the greatest number of Negroes in the community to support it--whom would you choose?[22]

Only those who received at least four votes were interviewed.

Daniel Thompson, in his study of New Orleans, apparently employed a combination of the positional, decisional, and reputational approaches. He stated:

> Many of the analyses and interpretations presented here utilize information supplied by interracial leaders, since it is often from among their ranks that effective interracial leaders who have identified with some issue of race relations, or engaged in definite social action calculated to bring about solutions to problems stemming from the limited citizenship, economic discrimination, and

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[21]Harold Pfautz, "The Power Structure of the Negro Sub-Community: A Case Study and a Comparative View," in Negro Politics in America, ed. by Harry A. Bailey, Jr. (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, Inc., 1967), p. 106.

[22]Ibid.

> inequalities of educational opportunities experienced by Negroes.[23]

Apparently Thompson first asked individuals known to be involved in civil rights activities for names of other individuals who might qualify as leaders within his stated definition. He also acquired names from his review of pertinent published and unpublished materials. And finally, he assumed that persons were leaders in the New Orleans Negro and white communities if they held certain key positions such as the officials of the N.A.A.C.P., the White Citizens' Council, the Urban League, the Ku Klux Klan, the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance, the Consumers' League, the Frontiers Club, the Congress of Racial Equality, and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.[24]

In the present study, attributed influence by knowledgeable individuals within the community was also employed. The first list of potential influentials was acquired by consulting experts within the community.[25] These experts (four Negroes and one white) were asked to

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[23]Daniel Thompson, The Negro Leadership Class (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1963), p. 4.

[24]Ibid., p. 8.

[25]The term "expert" refers to individuals of considerable experience in the field of investigation. See M. Elaine Burgess, op. cit., p. 211.

name Negroes they personally knew to be involved in civil rights activities within the Bayou City community. They were asked to confine their selections to persons who not only worked in civil rights activities but who were able to command the respect of and direct the activities of others who were involved in such activities. In addition, these experts were asked to list the names of whites who might also fit the above description. The point was emphasized that these individuals did not have to be sympathetic to the Negro cause. This produced a list of twenty-one names (twelve Negroes and nine whites). This group was then interviewed and asked to add to the list the names of persons who might have been omitted. An additional twenty-three Negroes and twelve whites were nominated by individuals on the first list. Of the twenty-three additional Negroes only seven received three nominations.[26] Of the twelve additional whites only three received the necessary number of nominations. The final list contained nineteen Negroes and twelve whites. Fifteen of the nineteen Negroes were interviewed--three were, for various reasons, unavailable for interviewing; one simply refused to be interviewed. Of the twelve whites on the final list ten were interviewed --one was away for the summer while the other's schedule was such that an interview was unattainable.

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[26]It was arbitrarily decided that three nominations would be necessary to be placed on the final list.

In addition to Negro and white leaders an attempt was also made to identify those public officials in Bayou City whose main interest was in the area of civil rights. To acquire the names of these individuals the five experts again were consulted. Again it was emphasized that these individuals did not have to be sympathetic toward the cause of the Negro--only that they have a primary interest in civil rights. This produced a list of four public officials which included the Mayor, the District Attorney, and two members of the Parish Police Jury (which acts more or less as the county legislative body).[27] The final list contained thirty-five individuals of whom twenty-nine were interviewed.

As an additional source of names for the construction of the first list, two newspapers (one daily and one weekly) were consulted. The daily contained no information whatsoever on local civil rights activities. There are two reasons for this noticeable lack of information on so controversial a matter. First, according to Professor James

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[27]Bayou City does not have a city council but rather a board of trustees which includes the Trustee of Finance, Trustee of Public Property and the Trustee of Public Safety who functions as Mayor of the City. This board functions as the city's legislative body with the Mayor acting as chairman of the board. For the purposes of this study, however, our concern will only be with the Mayor because, as he himself noted, "all civil rights matters are handled by my office."

Oliver, one of the white community leaders, the Mayor asked the news media not to publish stories on such things as desegregation of the local lunch counters or swimming pool. This was done so that the desegregation of these facilities could occur as smoothly and as quietly as possible. The Mayor confirmed the fact that he had made this request. And secondly, according to Carlton James, one of the Negro community leaders, the managers of the daily newspaper disagreed with Negro leaders and thought that the best policy to follow was to ignore civil rights activities in Bayou City. This charge was not confirmed.

The weekly newspaper, which is published by the Catholic Church, strongly supported the goals of the Negro. However, there was little mention of specific civil rights incidents in Bayou City. As a result only three names, all of which were mentioned by the "experts," were acquired from newspaper accounts.

And finally, a list of organizations involved in efforts to end racial discrimination was obtained from the five experts. It was assumed that the heads of these organizations would, by virtue of their positions, play a significant role in civil rights activities. As with the case of names acquired from the newspapers, all of the heads of the civil rights organizations were mentioned by the experts.

As can be observed in Table 1 a variety of techniques was employed in the studies of Negro leadership. The sources utilized in compiling the first lists varied somewhat although one source--knowledgeable persons within the community ("judges," "experts," or "informants")--was common to all of these studies. Aside from this one feature, other techniques varied. In only two of the studies, for example, were panels of judges employed, and in one of these a second panel was used. In four of the studies, the chain-referral or "snowball" technique was used to acquire names of potential leaders which possibly had been omitted from the first list. In only one of the studies was the chain-referral technique employed with individuals on the second list. A separate list of white community leaders was compiled in four of the studies while in only one study was a sample of the Negro community utilized.

In view of the variations in techniques, the question of comparability arose. Ideally the techniques should be identical but this is not always possible. Communities differ, and consequently the method for selecting leaders in one community will not always prove satisfactory for selecting leaders in another. Until an acceptable method which will prove satisfactory for all communities is developed, comparative studies of local communities will be handicapped by this problem. This is not to say that

TABLE 1

COMPARATIVE TECHNIQUES FOR SELECTION OF NEGRO LEADERSHIP

Sample Community	Source of First List	Panel of Judges	2nd Panel of Judges	Chain-referral Technique With Individuals on First List	Chain-referral Technique With Individual on Second List
Crescent City	1. Experts 2. Sample of Negro Community	No	No	Yes	Yes
Regional City	1. Negro Judges	Yes	No	No	No
Pacific City	1. Officers of Major Negro Organizations 2. Negro Informants 3. Local Negro Newspaper	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Providence, R.I.	1. Negro Informants 2. Newspapers	No	No	Yes	No
Bayou City	1. Experts 2. Newspapers	No	No	Yes	No
New Orleans	1. Experts 2. Newspapers 3. Organization Reports 4. Officers of Civil Rights Organizations	No	No	Unknown	Unknown

TABLE 1 (Cont'd.)

Sample Community	Separate List of White Leaders for Comparative Purposes	Sample of Negro Community as an Additional Source of Votes for Negro Leaders	Number of Negroes on Final List of Leaders
Crescent City	Yes	Yes	54
Regional City	Yes	No	34
Pacific City	No	No	36
Providence, R.I.	No	No	16
Bayou City	Yes	No	19
New Orleans	Yes	No	75

comparative studies of local communities are useless without such a method--only that the results of these studies will be less reliable until an acceptable method for all communities is developed. Nevertheless in each case mentioned the main criterion for leadership was reputation (attributed influence by knowledgeable persons within the community). While this does not remove the handicap of dissimilar techniques, it does provide somewhat of a basis for comparison.

CHAPTER II

BAYOU CITY--THE ECOLOGICAL SETTING

Bayou City, located thirty miles north of the Gulf of Mexico, is the industrial center of Southwest Deep South State. One of the largest urban centers in this rural area, Bayou City had a population of 50,312 in 1963.[1] The estimated population for 1967 was over 65,000 with Negroes comprising approximately thirty per cent of the total population for the period of 1960-1967 compared to an increase of only 20.4 per cent for the period of 1950-1960.[2] This growth can be explained by the fact that business, employment, and cultural opportunities in this southern community are attracting many persons from the surrounding areas.

Situated in one of the most fertile areas of Deep South State, Bayou City was formerly an important agricultural center. Unlike other neighboring agricultural centers which often specialized in one crop, Bayou City was

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[1]U. S. Bureau of the Census, Special Census of [Bayou City, Deep South State]. P-28, No. 1339 (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1963), p. 1.

[2]U. S. Bureau of the Census, United States Census of the Population: 1960. Final Report PC(1)-20A (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1961), p. 8.

recognized for its diversified crops including sugar cane, cotton, pepper, rice, corn, potatoes and okra. Although agricultural production still plays a significant role in the economy of this southern community, the oil and retail industries have become more important.

The discovery of large amounts of oil in and surrounding Bayou City has had two major effects upon the community. First, it has greatly increased the wealth of Bayou City and this in turn has led to the opening of many new businesses which has meant the creation of new job opportunities. And secondly, because of the growing job opportunities it has led to an increase in the city's population. At the present time these trends are still observable. Oil continues to be one of the most valuable economic resources in the city not only as a direct resource but also because of the other resources which have developed as a result of the presence of oil. To use one illustration, over seven hundred oil and allied concerns have established offices in Bayou City because of its central location in what has come to be called "oil country." Needless to say, this has greatly enhanced the number and types of jobs available. The increase in the number and particularly the types of jobs available are the prime causes of the great influx of people into the area.

The increasing prosperity of the city is due to other

industries as well as oil. Agriculture, as mentioned, is important and the presence of certain crops has directly contributed to the establishment of related industries. The abundance of sugar cane in the area has brought sugar mills to process the sugar cane; Bayou City also has a distribution center, a retail trade center, and an extensive medical center.

Several characteristics of Bayou City make it unique when compared to other communities in Southwest Deep South State. It has, for example, more facilities to accommodate conventions than any other city in the area. It has a greater number of tourist attractions than most nearby communities. There is a greater number and variety of transportation facilities to and from the city. It is, for example, one of only two cities in the southwestern portion of the state that has regular airline service with three airlines providing more than twenty flights daily. It is also noted for having the world's largest commercial helicopter service. Bayou City also has one of the largest educational complexes in the southwestern section of the state. The second largest state university is located in the city together with more than forty-seven public and parochial schools, a business college, four beautician schools and one rehabilitation school. Bayou City is thus more nearly cosmopolitan in outlook than any other city in Southwest Deep South State.

Unlike most other cities in the southwestern portion of the state, Bayou City continues to grow economically. The number and diversity of industries continue to increase, and as a result the number of jobs continues to increase. In April of 1964, for example, the unemployment rate was 3.6 per cent. In April of 1967 this had decreased to 3.2 per cent. In terms of the number of individuals added to the labor force this represented an increase of approximately 7,000 persons.

In spite of this growth the economic condition of the inhabitants of Bayou City is not as satisfactory as that of the inhabitants of the remainder of Deep South State. The median income for families in Bayou City in 1960 was $2,996.00 as compared to $3,513.00 for Deep South State.[3] The median income for Negroes was less, although the median for Negroes in Bayou City was higher than for Negroes in Deep South State. In 1960 the median income for Negro families and unrelated individuals in Bayou City was $2,100 as compared to $1,823.00 for Negroes in Deep South State.[4]

As the above figures indicate, there are differences

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[3]U. S. Bureau of the Census, United States Census of the Population: 1960. General Social and Economic Characteristics, Deep South State . Final Report PC(1)-20 (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1961), pp. 167-169.

[4]Ibid.

in the economic conditions of the white and Negro communities. There is an increasing number (and type) of jobs in this community, but most of them are not open to Negroes because many white employers feel that Negroes do not possess the technical skills necessary to fill these jobs, and secondly, many Negro community leaders believe that white employers discriminate in their hiring practices. Whatever the reason (or reasons), the fact remains that most of these new jobs are not being filled by Negroes.

Only a few types of jobs are open to the vast majority of Negroes in this community. For male Negroes this includes teaching in the local schools, construction work, farming, janitorial work, stocking clerks, and gardening. There are some professional positions developing for Negroes but the number is so small as to be insignificant. Negro electricians and plumbers exist but none of these is licensed and consequently must work for white electricians and plumbers. For female Negroes even fewer positions are available. Most can only hope for one of two types of positions--school teaching or maid services. Similar to the case of male Negroes, some professional positions such as nursing are developing but again the number is very small. It might be added that most of these jobs pay comparatively small salaries.

The relatively poor economic condition of the Negro community in Bayou City has affected other aspects of

community life. One of the most clearly visible is sub-standard housing. Although sub-standard housing has been a problem in the geographical area for many years, the importance of the problem has increased as more and more Negroes migrate to Bayou City. So pressing has this problem come to be that the city officials have recently enacted a housing ordinance which will require home owners to improve homes which do not meet minimum standards. This ordinance, according to Mayor J. Rayburn Bertrand, is directed primarily at those who own several homes which they rent to poor whites and Negroes. Owners exploit the poor by renting sub-standard homes at relatively the same prices they receive for renting "reasonable" homes. To what extent this ordinance will be enforced is questionable.

Another result of the unsatisfactory economic condition of the Negro community is the development of Negro neighborhoods. Until recently there were few segregated neighborhoods in this community. Negroes could reside in almost any part of the city they desired. As one of the most successful real estate agents, J. Alfred Mouton, noted, "Negroes and whites have always lived together." As the white community advanced economically at a much more rapid rate than did the Negro community, however, elements within the white community began establishing new suburbs into which Negroes could not afford to move. With the

passing of time racial boundaries became established. No data were obtained to establish whether or not property in these "all-white" neighborhoods would be sold to Negroes. J. Alfred Mouton pointed out that as far as he knew no Negro had ever attempted to purchase property in the more exclusive white neighborhoods in which Mouton had developed. He added, however, that he would sell property in any neighborhood to anyone who could afford to buy.

A third effect of the economic condition of the Negro community is what Carlton James, a prominent Negro leader, described as "a general lack of community pride, a lack of concern for what is going on around him." This refers to conditions such as general apathy, lack of appreciation for the value of education, lack of personal and community dignity, and family instability which are usually associated with community poverty.[5] These ills are not, of course, unique to either Bayou City or to Negroes but rather are associated with poverty regardless of where or with whom it exists.

Vital statistics cannot give one a complete picture of Bayou City. In order to understand the context within which race relations are conducted some attention must be

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[5]Daniel P. Moynihan, "The Roots of the Negro Problem," Politics in the Metropolis, ed. Thomas R. Dye and Brett Hawkins (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1967), pp. 73-75.

given to the local culture of the total community. Bayou City is the center of what has come to be popularly known as "Cajun country"--that part of the South settled by the French Acadians. The people of this area take great pride in their French heritage--identifying themselves in many ways more with the French people than with Americans. As one respondent who was reared outside of this Cajun-dominated area described them, "The Cajuns are more relaxed, more easy going, less puritanical, more open about sex, and more permissive in the rearing of their children than most Americans. This is very similar to peasant France." Many of the persons interviewed shared this view about the inhabitants of Cajun country. Some added that the Cajuns are more apathetic, less concerned about world and local affairs than people in other areas of the country. The general outlook on life by the Cajuns was felt by most respondents to be one of the principal factors in Bayou City's history of peaceful relations between the races. This will be given more attention in a later portion of this study.

Another part of the local culture which has bearing on this study is the Catholic religion. Bayou City contains approximately 53,505 Catholics out of a total population of approximately 65,000 persons.[6] The Church traditionally has

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[6]Census of the Catholic Church Parishes in Bayou City --1966 Annual Report.

played an important role in the lives of most of Bayou City's inhabitants although this role has been declining in recent years. As several respondents noted, two or three decades ago the parish church was the center of all activity in the community. The local pastor was not only the spiritual but often the economic and political leader as well. People trusted the Church and often felt compelled to obey its every dictate. This is no longer the case largely because other social and economic organizations, as well as the government, influence their thoughts and pervade their lives.

Another part of the local culture that is important for this study is the long tradition of racial discrimination in this southern community. In spite of the fact that Catholicism and the French heritage makes this area different from most of the South, Bayou City is still a part of the South and as such it too has a tradition of racial discrimination. There has not been the hostility between the races characteristic of much of the South, but discrimination has been present. It is extremely difficult to categorize racial discrimination--to break it down into neat problem areas. Several people interviewed for this study thought that racial discrimination was a "single" problem and could not be separated into categories. They expressed the view that specific problem areas such as school segregation or job discrimination were symptoms of

the same disease--a refusal on the part of white Americans to accept the Negro as an equal human being. For analytical purposes, however, it was necessary to separate this broad problem into specific problem areas.

Until the end of the Second World War, Negroes in Bayou City had been almost completely tolerant of racial discrimination. After decades of being subjected to complete rule by whites, Negroes more or less accepted "their place" in life in Bayou City. There was little or no communication with the outside world; they knew nothing of how Negroes in other parts of the country lived; there was nothing with which they could compare their existence. At the end of World War II Negroes in Bayou City began to be aware of their unsatisfactory existence. With the return of Negro soldiers who had experienced life in other parts of the world, stories were being told of how different life was in other places. As one Negro veteran put it, "I was amazed to find out that Negroes in Seattle were pretty much accepted by the whites--it was like a completely different world." Most of the Negro soldiers who returned to Bayou City soon readjusted to their customary place in life. A very few, however, did not. "I could not," said one informant, "not after years of fighting for this country." In the mid-1940's Negroes began making concerted efforts to break down racial barriers. A few organizations were

formed by interested Negroes--most of whom were veterans of World War II. Thus began the efforts of Bayou City's Negroes to acquire their civil rights; these efforts have continued until the present and likely will continue for years in the future.

The problems that were to be attacked were many. There was first of all the problem of educational opportunities. This was not simply the problem of allowing Negroes to enter "all-white" schools but rather giving to Negroes schools that met minimum standards in terms of equipment and faculty. As one Negro educator put it, "We were not so much concerned with sending our kids to their schools (because this was almost out of the question) as we were with trying to get sufficient space, equipment, and faculty for our own schools." Eventually the Negro acquired the needed space and faculty but in a few short years more space and better faculty were needed. The necessary equipment, according to several educators, was never supplied.

Secondly, there was the problem of job discrimination both by the city as well as by private employers. It was unthinkable that a Negro could get a respectable job with the possible exception of teaching in one of the few Negro schools. Even most of the menial city jobs were not open to Negroes. Job discrimination, together with discrimination in educational opportunities were the most important

but by no means the only problems confronting the Negro residents of this community.

There was also the problem of discrimination in the use of city owned facilities such as parks, swimming pools and other recreational facilities. Again, the Negroes were not at first so much concerned with the "white facilities" as they were with obtaining their own recreation areas. With the exception of empty lots or pastures which were often partially filled with livestock, there were no Negro playgrounds. Also of concern to Negroes was the problem of discrimination in the use of public restaurants and motels. This was not of great concern until recently because very few Negroes could afford to dine at a respectable restaurant or stop at motels.

In addition, the problem of housing discrimination began to develop when elements within the white community, particularly those who came from outside of Cajun country, advanced economically at a much greater pace than did Negroes. No one is absolutely certain that housing discrimination exists in Bayou City because no Negro has attempted to move into any of the all-white suburbs. There is, however, discrimination in public housing projects. Some years ago two sets of housing projects were built in Bayou City. These were separated by a distance of approximately two miles. One, situated in what is coming to be a

Negro neighborhood, is all Negro--the other, situated near the edge of the city, is all white. Thus far both housing projects are completely segregated.

Police brutality and a general denial of constitutional rights of Negroes accused of crimes also constituted a problem. As one Catholic clergyman, who was recently transferred out of the area supposedly because of his civil rights activities, said, "It is not at all uncommon for members of a Negro family to come to me and ask that I try and find out why a brother or husband or son was arrested and taken away in the middle of the night. The police come and simply take a Negro away without telling the family what, if any, crime he has committed. Sometimes if the family doesn't see about it right away, it would be days before the family is notified."

Negroes were also concerned with discrimination in Church owned facilities. Attention will be devoted to the Church at a later stage in this study. It need only be noted here that the Church has been accused of engaging in discriminatory practices for many years in Bayou City through its hospitals, Church owned schools, and even in maintaining segregated parish churches.

And finally, there was the problem of voting discrimination, although this was one of the least difficult problems to overcome. One might even go so far as to say

that voting has not really been a problem in Bayou City since the end of the Second World War. According to one of the first Negroes to vote in this city, very few Negroes have been denied the right to vote. One must be extremely cautious in interpreting this, however, because it is most difficult, if not impossible, to determine the number of Negroes who have been "encouraged" not to vote or to vote "in the right way." It is not rare in the South for economic pressure to be applied so as to discourage Negroes from registering and voting.

It is fairly evident from the above discussion that some racial problems still exist in Bayou City. However, it is important for one to understand that some progress has been achieved and that the leaders of this community are presently working to resolve other racial problems. Bayou City is not completely free from racial discrimination but it is a city in which changes have been made without violence. The following description, which was broadcast on April 8, 1968 by the news editor of one of the local television stations, provides additional insights into the community:

> I don't know if I can get anybody to buy this theory or not . . . but I think Martin Luther King might have liked [Bayou City]. . . .
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> As I've said before, we're not the shining example of good race relations, but we'll do until something better comes along.

For instance, Dr. King first entered the civil rights battle in the big bus boycott. He suffered abuse, and he went to jail.

The downtown lunch counters were integrated peacefully. No body [sic] had to sit in doorways . . . stage sit-ins at the counters . . . nobody got his skull craked [sic] by an irate storekeeper.

School integration didn't bring a mob of screaming mothers shouting obscenities.

The golf courses and swimming pools were integrated without bringing in the 101st airbone [sic] division.

Theaters and restaurants accepted the law of the land peacefully.

The public library was integrated without incident.

What the law has decreed, [Bayou City] people have accepted. There have been no fire hoses turned on demonstrators . . . the dogs haven't been turned loose, nor have the cattle prods been used. Policemen haven't looked the other way while white toughs pummeled peaceful demonstrators.

The move for a system of publically supported private schools in an effort to circumvent integration orders was opposed by [Bayou City] legislators . . . with election coming down upon them. One man who had opposed the segregation try was reelected in a smashing first primary victory.

When the protest march was scheduled from Bogalusa to Baton Rouge, they looked for a troop of State policemen who could keep the peace, and afford protection to all--in spite of race or color. They picked the men of Troop 1, [Bayou City], to handle the toughest part of the march.

And these men, regardless of personal feelings, would have taken on any odds to see that law and order and protection of human rights prevailed. And of course, USL broke the conference color-barriers in basketball.

I am not offering you a city free of prejudice or a city without racism or white supremacists. But I am saying that [Bayou City] has been a city which

has accepted the law of the land, and adhered to the principles of non-violence.

There have been other cities in our own state where civil rights were won by negroes [sic] only at the cost of bloodshed. New Orleans was a hot-spot of the nation when the schools were integrated.

Plaquemine almost burst apart with bitter violence when the sit-ins came.

And this was mild compared to other cities, both north and south.

But in [Bayou City] , because it was the law of the land, and because the people here know that the nation must be of laws and not of men--schools, resturants, [sic] theaters, libraries . . . all opened their doors to people of any race.

It was done in a large measure through the efforts of the excellent leadership of the local negro [sic] community. They did it quietly, effectively and non-violently.

And let me add this . . . while many white pelple [sic] acted because of respect and affection for their fellow man, no matter what his race.

Because it was the law of the land, I saw quiet, orderly integration with plain clothes officers standing by to see that non-violence prevailed. I think Martin Luther King might have liket [sic] [Bayou City]. . . .[7]

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[7]Bob Hamm Special Report, KATC-TV [Bayou City], Monday, April 8, 1968.

CHAPTER III

NEGRO LEADERSHIP IN BAYOU CITY

In an attempt to determine whether or not a recognizable Negro leadership existed in Bayou City, polls were taken among three groups including potential Negro leaders, white community leaders and city officials who have been involved in civil rights activities. The first poll, taken among potential Negro leaders, resulted in the list below indicating the number of votes each received and the percentage of individuals polled who voted for each leader. The list is made up of those who received a minimum of three votes from their peers. An average of 9.8 votes were cast by each Negro respondent; a total of 147 were cast. Of these, 88.1 per cent (134) of the votes were cast for the nineteen leaders who received the minimum three votes; the remaining 11.9 per cent (thirteen) were distributed among nine other individuals.[1]

There appeared to be substantial agreement among the nineteen respondents as to whom they considered Negro leaders. From a list of thirty-five potential leaders,

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[1]It may be noted that of the list of thirty-five Negro leaders only twenty-eight have been accounted for. The reason for this is that a few Negroes added to the list names of persons whom they thought might be influential but for whom they personally did not vote.

TABLE 2

NEGRO LEADERS RANKED ACCORDING TO NUMBER OF VOTES RECEIVED FROM OTHER NEGRO LEADERS IN LEADERSHIP POLL

Leaders	Number of Votes Received	Percentage of Votes
Carlton James	14	93.3
Albert Malveaux	14	93.3
Fr. Albert McKnight	12	80.0
Charles Finley	9	60.0
Ethel Martin	9	60.0
Mervin Harmon	9	60.0
Jesse Taylor	8	53.3
Robert Henderson	7	46.6
Frederick Mouton	6	40.0
Charles Prejean	6	40.0
George Bowles	6	40.0
Vincent Coco	5	33.3
Paul Taylor	5	33.3
Joseph Francis	5	33.3
Wallace Mouton	4	26.6
Doremus Dorsey	4	26.6
W. D. Smith	4	26.6
Amos Aldrich	4	26.6
Rita Thibodeaux	3	20.0
Total	N=19	

these nineteen individuals emerged as the leadership group.[2] Thus, from the point of view of the Negro influentials, there is a recognizable Negro leadership group in Bayou City. However, in order to determine if other groups also thought these people were influential, white civil rights influentials were polled to obtain more information about Negro leaders.

The method for selecting the white leadership group was the same as that for selecting Negro leaders. From a list of twenty-one potential leaders, twelve received the minimum required three votes.[3] In all, twenty-nine Negroes were mentioned by the ten white leaders as potential leaders of the Negro community. Only ten of the twenty-nine, however, received three votes. Each white respondent cast an average of 8.2 votes--a total of eighty-two votes. Of this total, 71.7 per cent (or fifty-nine) of the votes were cast for ten Negro leaders. The remaining 28.3 per cent (or twenty-three) were distributed among nineteen other

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[2]It may be noted that women constituted a very small percentage of the sample. Of the nineteen individuals receiving a sufficient number of votes to be considered leaders, only three were women. This ordinarily would not seem surprising, except that it is unusual for this particular geographical area where women often are the dominant figures in family and social life. One would expect that women would have a much greater role in civil rights activities in view of their generally strong position within the home.

[3]As was mentioned earlier, ten of the twelve were interviewed.

Negroes who did not receive the minimum three votes.

As a third source of votes indicating Negro leadership, a poll was taken among the public officials who were deeply concerned with civil rights activities. The list of public officials was acquired from consultations with experts who were asked to name some of those public officials who most often were involved in matters having to do with civil rights. This produced a list of only four public officials. Several other Negro leaders were asked to add to the list but no additional names were acquired. Most Negroes questioned readily admitted that other than the Mayor they knew of no other officials who fit this description. As far as they were able to detect, any decision pertaining to civil rights was made solely by the the Mayor. White leaders who were asked the same question agreed in most cases with Negro leaders. The Mayor confirmed this point although he noted that from time to time some officials did offer suggestions.

An average of 8.5 votes were cast by each official; a total of thirty-four votes were cast. Of this total, 35.2 per cent (or twelve) were cast for the four individuals who received the minimum three votes. The remaining 64.8 per cent (or twenty-two) of the votes were distributed among sixteen other individuals.

One of the most surprising results of the poll of

TABLE 3

NEGRO LEADERS RANKED ACCORDING TO NUMBER OF VOTES RECEIVED IN WHITE LEADERSHIP POLL

Leaders	Number of Votes Received	Percentage of Votes
Carlton James	10	100.0
Father McKnight	10	100.0
Albert Malveaux	7	70.0
Charles Prejean	7	70.0
Robert Henderson	6	60.0
Vincent Coco	5	50.0
Wallace Mouton	5	50.0
Charles Finley	3	30.0
Joseph Francis	3	30.0
Mervin Harmon	3	30.0
Total	N=10	

public officials was that they could agree on only four Negroes out of a list of twenty. It was assumed that there would be more agreement among the members of this group than among the members of the others. However, it appears that with the exception of four leaders each public official had his own notion of the principal Negro leaders in Bayou City.

The results of the three polls make a comparative analysis possible. With reference to the relationship between the results of the Negro leadership and white leadership polls, substantial agreement on Negro leadership was found. Seventy-five per cent (twenty-one out of twenty-eight) of the selections made by the Negro leadership corresponded with seventy per cent (twenty-one out of thirty) of the selections made by the white leadership. There also was substantial agreement between the selections made by Negro leaders and public officials. Sixty per cent (seventeen out of twenty-eight) of the selections made by the Negro leadership corresponded with eighty per cent (seventeen out of twenty-one) of the selections made by public officials. This would suggest that although the public officials could not agree among themselves as to who the Negro leaders are, the selections they made as a group compared favorably with those made by the Negro leadership.

On the basis of the comparison of the selections of

TABLE 4

NEGRO LEADERS RANKED ACCORDING TO
NUMBER OF VOTES RECEIVED IN
PUBLIC OFFICIAL POLL

Leaders	Number of Votes Received	Percentage of Total Votes
Carlton James	3	75.0
Charles Finley	3	75.0
Wallace Mouton	3	75.0
Doremus Dorsey	3	75.0
Total	N=12	

Negro leaders made by the three groups, there appears to be a recognizable Negro leadership group. But operating on the assumption that agreement in selecting and ranking Negro leaders by the three groups could possibly have occurred by chance, two statistical tests, the Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient and the Kendall Coefficient of Concordance W, were employed to test for the statistical significance of the agreement in selecting and ranking Negro leaders.[4] The results of these tests indicate that the agreement between the three groups both in selecting and ranking Negro leaders very likely did not occur by chance. Thus it can be said that there is in Bayou City a recognizable Negro leadership group.

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[4]In an attempt to test for the association of mutually selected names by Negro leaders and white leaders the Spearman rank correlation coefficient was utilized. The value of r_s was found to equal .623 with the correction factor T taken into account for tied groupings. Using the t test to test the null hypothesis that the association occurred by chance, t was found to equal 2.71. With nineteen degrees of freedom a t as large a 2.71 is significant at the .01 level. Using the same test to measure the association of mutually selected names by Negro leaders and public officials, r_s was found to equal .335 with the correction factor T taken into account for tied groupings. In testing the null hypothesis, t was found to equal 1.376. With fifteen degrees of freedom, a t as large as 1.376 is significant at the .10 level. In both cases the null hypothesis was rejected and the conclusion reached that there were positive associations between the ranking of names by Negro leaders and white leaders on the one hand and by Negro leaders and public officials on the other.

The Kendall coefficient of concordance W was employed to test for the association of the rankings made by all three groups. The coefficient of concordance W was found to equal .581 with the correction factor T taken into

TABLE 5

NEGRO LEADERS RANKED ACCORDING TO VOTES RECEIVED BY OTHER NEGRO LEADERS, WHITE LEADERS AND PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Leaders	Number of Negro Votes	Number of White Votes	Number of Public Official Votes
Carlton James	14	10	3
Albert Malveaux	14	7	-
Fr. Albert McKnight	12	10	1
Charles Finley	9	3	3
Ethel Martin	9	1	-
Mervin Harmon	9	3	2
Jesse Taylor	8	-	-
Robert Henderson	7	6	1
Frederick Mouton	6	1	2
Charles Prejean	6	7	1
George Bowles	6	2	-
Vincent Coco	5	5	-
Paul Taylor	5	1	1
Joseph Francis	5	3	2
Wallace Mouton	4	5	3
Doremus Dorsey	4	1	3
W. D. Smith	4	-	-
Amos Aldrich	4	-	-
Rita Thibodeaux	3	-	1
Antony Pierre	2	-	1
Clossie Chassion	2	1	-
Doris Bernard	2	1	-
Clayton Arceneaux	2	1	-
Lailor Broussard	1	-	1
Fr. Wm. Oliver	1	2	-
Arthur Richards	1	1	1
Augustine Ventroy	1	-	2
Fred Wright	-	2	-
Peter Vallot	-	1	-
Mrs. O. M. Gibbs	-	1	2
Alex Lewis	-	1	1
Eva Reynolds	1	1	1
Gussie Reynolds	-	1	-
Arthur Richards	-	1	1
Rev. L. D. Jackson	-	1	1
Rita Joseph	-	1	-
Kenneth Mouton	-	1	-
Total	147	82	34

This finding is contrary to Hunter's finding in Regional City that leaders within one group were not familiar with leaders in the other.[5] However, the finding in Bayou City that white leaders are aware of Negro leaders is similar to Burgess's finding in Crescent City. As she stated, " u nlike the research results in other Southern urban centers, Crescent City results indicate that the white leadership there does have knowledge about those Negroes reputed to have power and influence."[6] The reason for this familiarity between Negro and white leaders (including public officials) in Bayou City seems to be that Negroes, in their consistent efforts since the end of World War II to make advances in civil rights, have been in almost constant communication with public officials and other community leaders. In more recent times, with the increase in the tempo of the civil rights movement on the national level, the Negro leadership in Bayou City appears to be gradually changing. This has caused a temporary slowdown in

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account for tied groupings. In testing the null hypothesis, chi square was found to equal 20.916. With twelve degrees of freedom this value is significant beyond the .10 level. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected and the conclusion reached that there was a positive association in the rankings made by the three groups involved. See Sidney Siegel, Nonparametric Statistics (New York: McGraw-Hill Co., 1956), pp. 202-213; 229-239.

[5]Floyd Hunter, op. cit., p. 99.

[6]M. Elaine Burgess, op. cit., p. 98.

intergroup communication primarily because white leaders, particularly public officials, have been reluctant to begin "dealing" with new and younger leaders. Apparently these officials are under the impression that the younger leadership is more radical than the older leadership in its approach to solving civil rights problems.

If race relations in Bayou City are improved because of leadership communication, and among the Negroes and whites, it is possible to identify the key individuals in the linkage.

Perhaps the most prominent Negro leader in Bayou City is Carlton James. Mr. James, who is fifty-five years of age, has gradually lost his vision. Even blindness, however, has not daunted the vigor of this highly respected man. Mr. James was born in Bayou City and with the exception of several years in college and in the military during the Second World War, he has spent all of his life in this community. In the years following World War II Mr. James worked as an educator in the public school system, retiring only recently because of his blindness.

In the area of civil rights Carlton James is unsurpassed in terms of years of service he has given the community. Following in his father's footsteps, Mr. James began working to improve relations between the races immediately after World War II. It was his father, J.

Wallace James, who with the aid of several other Negroes including Dr. L. A. Butler, Dr. R. B. Jones, W. D. Smith, and Clifton Mouton, formed the first Negro organization designed to improve the conditions of the Negro community in Bayou City. This organization, the Business League, was first organized in 1935 and with the help of Carlton James was reorganized in 1946. Since that year Mr. James has been an active member of the Business League. This is only one of several civil rights organizations in which Mr. James holds membership. Others are Southern Consumers' Cooperative, Deep South State Human Relations Council, Bayou City Human Relations Council, N.A.A.C.P. and the Bayou City Alliance for Progress. Mr. James was also one of the first residents of Bayou City to attempt to form a bi-racial human relations council. Speaking in an interview for Ave Maria, a national Catholic weekly publication, Mr. James said:

> Twenty-five years ago, I tried to help start a Human Relations Council in [Bayou City], but one influential white citizen frowned on the idea and it folded. That's how afraid the Negroes were then. Today, Negroes are more educated, and there are not as many splits in leadership.[7]

One of the most outspoken of the Negro leaders in Bayou City, Mr. James had led the effort to keep Bayou City residents at the fore of the local civil rights leadership.

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[7]Peggy Siegmund, "Is the Church Speaking Out in the South," Ave Maria, Vol. 104 (October, 1966), p. 16.

Moreover, as a leading Catholic layman in the area, Mr. James also has spoken out against the inactivity of the Church in civil rights. In the interview for Ave Maria, Mr. James declared:

> What we need in the South is for the Church and its leaders to take a more militant stand in the area of race relations. . . . We need more Bishops to take a stand like Bishop Morkovsky of Houston did. He said every Catholic institution has to be Catholic and cannot discriminate regarding race. In the South we're afraid to scratch the Baptist belt. Yet I don't know what we're afraid of in [Bayou City].[8]

In a later passage Mr. James cautioned:

> It is not enough just to have the Bishop issue a decree saying no one should hinder a person from attending church because of race or color, because for so long we have been in separate churches. What we need are Bishops who back up what they say with action. If Bishops would go to the Negro churches and tell the people, 'I want to see you at all the churches in the diocese when I come around,' perhaps Negroes would know they were accepted.[9]

Another prominent Negro leader in Bayou City is Father Albert McKnight, a thirty-nine year old native of New York who has spent the last fourteen years in Bayou City. A dedicated civil rights worker, Fr. McKnight has been most active in the area of economic improvement for all the Negroes of southwest Deep South State. Realizing that it would take an organized effort to improve the economic condition of the Negro, Fr. McKnight began studying

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[8] Ibid., p. 15.

[9] Ibid.

cooperatives in an effort to form such an organization in Bayou City. In 1960 he attended St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, and in 1961 attended Duquesne University in Pittsburgh. He then returned to Bayou City and formed the Southern Consumer's Cooperative People's Enterprise which is a

> . . . self-help co-op with 200 members in Deep South State. This Deep South State co-op was the first group to receive a Small Business Administration loan from the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. The educational foundation, a non-profit organization, sponsored six head-start projects last summer [1965] and informs groups and individuals in Deep South State and adjacent states of programs offered through the Office of Economic Opportunity in Washington, D.C.[10]

Although most of his efforts are devoted to the economic uplift of the Negro community, Fr. McKnight also has devoted some attention to other areas, such as attempts to mobilize the Negro voters of Bayou City behind Negro candidates. It was he who urged three Negroes to run for various county offices during the 1967 elections in Bayou City. In addition, he also raised funds to support their limited campaigns and urged Negroes to register and vote for the Negro candidates. Although the three candidates were defeated in the election, Fr. McKnight has not given up hopes that a Negro can be elected in Bayou City. He already has begun to mobilize efforts for the next city and county elections.

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[10] *Ibid.*, p. 16.

One of the newcomers to appear in the Negro leadership in Bayou City is Albert Malveaux. Although Mr. Malveaux was born outside of Bayou City, he has spent the last twenty-two years in Bayou City. A twenty-seven year old graduate student, Mr. Malveaux is seeking a degree in computer science from the local university in Bayou City. His main interests correspond closely to those of Fr. Albert McKnight, with whom he has worked during the past three years, in that he is primarily concerned with economic improvements within the Negro community. He is an active worker within the Southern Consumer Co-op and holds membership in several civil rights organizations including the Human Relations Council of the University of Southwestern Deep South State, the Bayou City Human Relations Council, and the Conference on Religion and Race, an organization set up by members of the Catholic Church to study ways in which the Church can aid the Negro in his quest for equal rights.

Representative of the younger leaders, Mr. Malveaux is more impatient with white officials than most of the older leaders. He is a strong supporter of such techniques as economic boycotts and protest demonstrations to apply Negro pressure on white officials to obtain concessions. However, he has not completely abandoned hope for obtaining concessions through the voting power of the Negro. The

importance of the Negro vote, he has pointed out, can best be demonstrated by electing Negro officials. Only in this way does he feel the Negro vote will be important. In the hope of mobilizing Negro voters and consequently demonstrating the power of the Negro vote, Mr. Malveaux plans to enter the race for the county school board in November of 1968.

One of the older, more established Negro leaders of Bayou City is Doremus Dorsey. Mr. Dorsey, who is by occupation a shipping clerk, is a fifty-six year old life-long resident of Bayou City. His occupation is somewhat misleading because it does not portray the importance of the man in community affairs. Although he prefers to classify himself as a shipping clerk, Mr. Dorsey has had a variety of jobs with one of the leading business figures in Bayou City, Maurice Hyman. The fact that he has worked closely for most of his life with Mr. Hyman, who developed the multi-million dollar Oil Center in Bayou City, has partially put Mr. Dorsey in a position of influence within official circles in Bayou City. Mr. Dorsey is considered by white officials to be a representative of the Negro community, and was, for example, appointed by Mayor J. Rayburn Bertrand to the Auditorium Committee which was to represent the Negro community in matters coming before the Mayor.

Representative of some of the older, more established

Negro leaders, Mr. Dorsey is less inclined to use such techniques as boycotts and demonstrations in order to obtain concessions from white officials. Instead, he believes that problems can be worked out between Negro and white leaders over the conference tables. He believes that most of the racial problems will be solved in the near future and that the lack of animosity between the races will have a salutary effect on these solutions.

Thus far attention has been given to Negro leaders, but Bayou City's record in race relations has also been due to the cooperation of white community leaders and white officials. One of the leading figures in the total community is Dr. James Oliver. A forty-two year old native of Deep South State, Dr. Oliver obtained a Ph.D. in Chemistry from Tulane University in 1955. Since then, he has resided in Bayou City serving as Associate Professor, Professor, Director of the Computing Center, and now Dean of the Graduate College of the local university. Dr. Oliver has served on many committees dealing with civic affairs and has been an outspoken advocate of equal rights for Bayou City's Negroes. He is representative of a growing number of leading citizens, particularly those associated with the local university, who have taken upon themselves the responsibility of promoting peaceful change in the community. In addition to civil rights activities, Dr. Oliver

has had a special interest in working to aid the poverty stricken families of Bayou City. He is, for example, a former President of Acadiana Neuf, a six-parish War on Poverty community action agency.

Dr. Oliver was one of the first white citizens of Bayou City to actively work on behalf of the Negro community. He has personally worked with city officials, representatives from the business community, and Negro leaders in desegregating public facilities in a peaceful manner. In recent years, Dr. Oliver has been gradually withdrawing from active participation in civil rights activities because, as he told this writer, the Negro leadership is more than capable of carrying on the struggle. He thought that it would be more effective in the future for Negroes to assume the struggle for themselves. This by no means indicates that he has completely withdrawn from participation in civil rights activities. At the present time, Dr. Oliver has been working within the Catholic Church to try and get the Church leaders to do more in civil rights.

Another figure of importance in the community is Henry Libersat, a thirty-two year old native of Deep South State, who is the editor of Bayou City's weekly newspaper. Mr. Libersat has resided in Bayou City for only nine years but he has devoted much time and effort to civil rights. As editor of a Catholic weekly newspaper that has a circulation of 28,000 weekly copies throughout a fourteen county

area, he has used his newspaper to support the goals of the Negro community. Mr. Libersat has often devoted editorials to racial problems in Bayou City. Mr. Libersat noted, for example, that in 1960 every weekly contained an editorial supporting various goals of the Negro community. In 1961 and 1962 the emphasis was not as great as in 1960 but in 1963 the paper published 32 weeks of consistent editorials calling for changes in the city's racial situation. And, like Dr. Oliver, Mr. Libersat has worked within the Catholic Church to get the high ranking officials of the Church to do more in the area of civil rights. He believes that the utlimate solution to many problems of racial discrimination will someday be provided by the Catholic Church.

Perhaps the most important figure in civil rights in Bayou City is the mayor of the city, J. Rayburn Bertrand. A forty-eight year old native of Deep South State, Mayor Bertrand has resided in Bayou City for the past thirty-four years, the last eight of which he has served as Mayor of the community. Prior to becoming mayor, Mr. Bertrand was a successful real estate insurance agent. Many of the Negro leaders interviewed considered Mr. Bertrand to be the best mayor Bayou City has had as far as civil rights is concerned. The popularity of the Mayor, however, is not confined to the Negro community. This was demonstrated in the recent Democratic Primary in Bayou City in February of 1968, at

which Mr. Bertrand defeated a lone challenger by a margin of approximately 4800 votes out of a total vote of 7600. This is even more significant in view of the fact that Deep South State is primarily a one-party state.

It is somewhat unusual for a mayor of a southern community to play as active a role in civil rights as has this man. Scattered comments made by the Mayor in two interviews indicate that he is not so much a "champion of civil rights" as he is a "protector of community peace." For example, he explained his role in the successful desegregation of the local lunch counters and some restaurants prior to 1964 by asserting, "This thing (violence as a result of resisting desegregation by sit-in demonstrators) was moving around the country. To avoid trouble we decided to act. We talked to owners of public places and told them their best interest would be served by not excluding anyone."

Mayor Bertrand's main interests seem to be in the area of poverty and education. Because he believes that the sources of many civil rights problems in Bayou City are poverty and insufficient education, he has labored to provide educational facilities for the young and middle-aged unemployed in the community, and in recent months he has made efforts to improve housing in the Negro community. He has also authorized a massive asphalt road-pavement program

for all streets in Bayou City at no cost to the residents of streets being covered. Judging from the election returns, his program for improvements within the Negro community has met with public approval.

It is most difficult, if not impossible, to account for the moderate attitude of Mayor Bertrand. Surely his actions in civil rights are unusual, but one wonders why they are different. Perhaps his moderate attitude is partly due to having been reared in close association with Negroes (but this is not unusual in a part of the country where many Negroes and whites are reared together); perhaps it is due partly to his Catholic-Cajun background (although neither is this unusual in Deep South State); perhaps, as he himself indicated, his moderation results from his desire for community peace. This latter appears to be the most plausible explanation, but it is not certain that it is the only one. Again, one cannot say with any degree of accuracy why Mayor Bertrand (or Mayor Allen of Atlanta, Mayor Cavanaugh of Detroit or any other individual) is moderate when others are not.

One example of an official who is not as cooperative with Negro leaders as Mr. Bertrand but who has a background very similar to the mayor is the District Attorney, Bertrand DeBlanc. Mr. DeBlanc is a fifty-six year old native of Deep South State who has resided in Bayou City

for the past twenty-two years. Mr. DeBlanc, who once defended without pay a Negro youth indicted for first degree murder when no other attorney would provide counsel, is not a very strong supporter of the goals of the Negro community. He is of the opinion that Bayou City has not had real problems in civil rights. When asked what he thought had been the most significant racial problems Bayou City had faced in the past ten years, he replied: "In view of the fact that there have been separate but equal recreational and other facilities, there have really been no problems." More recently, Mr. DeBlanc requested the county to supply him with several attorneys who would work full time in trying to find ways to halt the federal court orders to desegregate public schools in Deep South State. The District Attorney, then, is representative of those officials who are not inclined to allow changes in the present pattern of race relations in Bayou City.

Having introduced some of the members of the Negro and white leadership, attention may now be given to the second factor hypothesized to contribute to the nonviolent resolution of racial conflict--a leadership relatively small and highly unified in terms of agreement on goals of the Negro community and the means to be employed in the realization of those goals. It is evident from the list of Negro leaders presented in the early portion of this chapter

that the Negro leadership group in Bayou City is not very small. It was thought that there would emerge a top leadership group consisting of no more than two or three leaders, but this was not supported by the data obtained. As can be seen in Table 2, the Negro leadership group consisted of nineteen individuals with none clearly constituting a top leadership group.

One of the major benefits in having a small leadership group is the likelihood of obtaining a high degree of unity among those people who direct the activities of others engaged in civil rights activities. The question that must be considered now is whether or not the Negro leaders of Bayou City have obtained substantial cohesion in spite of the relatively large size of the leadership group. In an effort to measure the extent of unity among the Negro leaders of this community three tests were utilized. First, Negro leaders were asked to list the organizations in which they held membership. As can be observed in Table 6, the results of this poll indicate that many of the Negro leaders belong to the same organizations. This at least suggests that there is considerable contact among the Negro leaders. Although such contact does not necessarily mean that there is group unity, contact among members is one factor that can lead to unity among members of a group.

In a second inquiry into the extent of group unity, Negro leaders were asked to rank in order of importance four possible problem areas in civil rights. The question read as follows:

> How would you rank the four following items in terms of the most important problems facing Bayou City today?
>
> a. Complete integration of schools
> b. Equal job opportunities
> c. Fair housing
> d. Increase in number of Negroes employed by the city

The results of this test indicate that some unity with regards to problems in Bayou City exists among Negro leaders. The vast majority (93.3 per cent) of the leaders considered complete integration of schools and equal employment opportunities as the two most important problems in Bayou City. However, none of the four alternatives was selected as the most important problem by a majority of the leaders. Slightly less than half of the respondents (46.6 per cent) considered integration of schools as the most important problem while the same percentage (46.6 per cent) considered equal job opportunities as the most important problem. Forty per cent of the Negro respondents were of the opinion that an increase in the number of Negroes employed by the city ranked third in importance and 66.6 per cent of them considered fair housing the least

TABLE 6

PERCENTAGE OF NEGRO LEADERS RANKING COMMUNITY PROBLEMS

Rank in Importance	Problems			
	Schools	Jobs	Housing	Increase in City Jobs
First	46.6	46.6	6.6	0.0
Second	26.6	33.3	6.6	33.3
Third	20.0	20.0	20.0	40.0
Fourth	6.6	0.0	66.6	26.6
Total	99.8	99.9	99.8	99.9

N=15

important of the four alternatives.[11]

In a third inquiry into the amount of unity among Negro leaders, the respondents were asked to rank devices which possibly could be used in solving civil rights problems. The question was stated as follows:

> How would you rank the following devices in terms of solving the problems confronting Bayou City?
>
> a. Courts
> b. Violence
> c. Negotiation
> d. No action

The results of this test indicate a significant amount of unity on this topic. Eleven of the fifteen (or 73.3 per cent) leaders agreed that negotiation ranked first in importance. The same percentage (73.3 per cent) agreed that courts are next in importance and sixty per cent were of the opinion that violence is the least important device. Sixty per cent of the leaders also preferred no action

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[11]The Kendall coefficient of concordance W was employed to test the association of the rankings made by Negro leaders. The coefficient of concordance W was found to have a value of .432. The null hypothesis that the 15 sets of rankings were not related was tested. With an s of 475, the value of W is significant beyond the .01 level. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected and the conclusion reached that there was a significant relationship in the various sets of rankings. See Sidney Siegel, op. cit., pp. 229-239.

TABLE 7

PERCENTAGE OF NEGRO LEADERS RANKING POSSIBLE DEVICES TO BE USED IN ATTACKING PROBLEMS

Rank in Importance	Devices to be Used			
	Negotiation	Courts	No Action	Violence
First	73.3	26.6	0.0	0.0
Second	26.6	73.3	0.0	0.0
Third	0.0	0.0	60.0	40.0
Fourth	0.0	0.0	40.0	60.0
Total	99.9	99.9	100.0	100.0

N=15

rather than the use of violence as a technique in solving problems.[12]

The importance of group unity should not be underestimated. The maintenance of white supremacy in the South depends in part upon unity within the white community as well as upon divisions within the Negro community and within whatever Negro leadership group is in existence. While some divisions have existed within the leadership group in Bayou City, these divisions have not been so great as to nullify the bargaining position of the Negro leaders. As in any bargaining situation, the strength of a participant's position depends, among other things, upon the degree to which his membership is united behind him together with the degree to which he speaks _for_ the group as a whole. The existence of this unity in Bayou City has been an added source of strength to the Negro bargaining position.

It was also hypothesized that a strong association of Negro leaders with the local minority population would contribute to the nonviolent resolution of racial conflict.

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[12]The Kendall coefficient was again utilized to test the association of the rankings by Negro leaders. The coefficient of concordance W was found to have a value of .825. The null hypothesis was tested and it was found that with an s of 929, W is significant beyond the .01 level. The null hypothesis was rejected and the conclusion reached that there was a positive association between the various rankings made by Negro leaders. See Sidney Siegel, _op_. _cit_., pp. 229-239.

It was noted in the Introduction that this association could be obtained either by being from the area (born in the community) or by having spent a significant portion of one's life in the community. In order to determine whether such an association existed between the Negro leaders and the minority population in Bayou City, the respondents were asked questions pertaining to their place of birth, and length of residence in Bayou City. As can be observed in Table 8 sixty per cent (or eleven) of the Negro leaders were born in Bayou City. Of the six leaders who were born outside of Bayou City, three were born in Deep South State, two were born in other southern states and only one in a non-southern state.[13]

In terms of the length of residence in Bayou City, more than half (sixty per cent) of the Negro leaders have spent their entire lives in Bayou City. As Table 8 shows, the remaining forty per cent of the Negro leaders have spent an average of 40.5 per cent of their lives in Bayou City. The data indicate that Negro leaders have spent considerable portions of their lives in the community,

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[13]Fewer white leaders were born in Deep South State than was the case with Negro leaders. Only 64.4 per cent of the white leaders interviewed were natives of Deep South State as compared to eighty per cent of Negro leaders. Only 21.4 per cent of white leaders were born in Bayou City as compared to sixty per cent of Negro leaders.

TABLE 8

PLACE OF BIRTH AND LENGTH OF RESIDENCE
OF NEGRO LEADERS IN BAYOU CITY

Place of Birth	Percentage of Negro Leaders
Bayou City	60.0
Other Cities in Deep South State	20.0
Other Southern States	13.3
Non-Southern States	6.6
Total	99.9

N-15

Number of Negro Leaders	Age	Percentage of Life in Bayou City
9	*	100.0
1	27	81.4
1	41	41.4
1	42	38.0
1	39	36.4
1	38	26.3
1	35	20.0

N=15

*Ages of these individuals ranged from 26 to 67 years; average age is 45.6 years.

thus encouraging identification with the local minority population. The importance of having primarily local leadership must be emphasized. In civil rights demonstrations in other communities the charge of "outside agitators" has been leveled by white officials against Negro leaders. Frequently, this has come to be one of the favorite dilatory techniques by public officials and other leaders to delay changes in civil rights as long as possible.

This is not to say that "outside agitators" are always harmful to local civil rights movements. On the contrary, outside leaders such as the late Dr. Martin Luther King can be very effective in directing national attention to problems of racial discrimination. However, in some cases a local civil rights movement is most effective when it is led by local leaders. It must be understood that cooperation by elements in the white community is necessary if certain goals are to be realized. Often the introduction of outside leaders, particularly those associated with extremist organizations, can alienate otherwise helpful elements from the white community. Negro leaders in Bayou City believe their efforts are most effective by having the local movement led by local leaders. Judging from the fact that no white official or community leader indicated the local movement was led by outside sources or that the demands stated by the Negro leaders

were not desired by the Negro people, the management of the local movement by local leaders appears to contribute to the overall effectiveness of the Negro leadership.

It was also hypothesized that a Negro leadership that is informed of and alert to strategies and techniques that are being employed in other parts of the United States would be better able to contribute to the nonviolent resolution of racial conflict. Daniel Thompson, for example, found in his study of New Orleans that the Negro leadership, made up primarily of "native sons," was isolated from the mainstream of the Negro protest movement. As a result, he said, the Negro community "is seriously deprived of many of the leadership strategies and techniques that other Negro leaders, in other parts of the United States, have developed in getting things done in the realm of racial 'uplift.'"[14] Thompson suggested that speakers be brought in from other areas to advise local leaders on new techniques--but he believed that even this is insufficient.

Another possibility that would facilitate both a "local leadership" and this constant interchange of new ideas, strategies, and techniques would be travel by native sons to other parts of the United States to exchange information and ideas and to observe methods. These persons then could return home and begin to implement whatever

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[14]Daniel Thompson, op. cit., pp. 27-28.

new plans they acquired.

This is precisely what has been occurring in Bayou City. Several of the younger leaders have journeyed to various cities around the nation to attend meetings and conferences designed to explore and develop new strategies. During the period in which this research was conducted at least three of the persons interviewed traveled to other parts of the country for these purposes. One of these, Charles Prejean, spent over two months in the eastern United States learning new economic methods to be employed in Bayou City. Another Negro leader, Fr. Albert McKnight, has traveled over much of the United States (and to Canada) attempting to learn new techniques which could possibly aid the development of Southern Consumers and the economic improvement of the Negro community. Carlton James has likewise made a number of trips to several cities (mostly in the South) to attend conferences relating to civil rights. Although these men were the only three who made such trips while the research for the present study was in progress, others who have attended conferences in other parts of the state and the nation include Albert Malveaux, Vincent Coco and Paul Taylor. The Bayou City Negro leadership, then, has made deliberate efforts to keep informed of the civil rights movement in other parts of the United States.

The quality of consistency was also hypothesized to

affect the nonviolent resolution of racial conflict. Unlike the Negro leadership which emerges for the purpose of attacking a single problem in other communities and then dissolves before concerning itself with other problems, the leadership in Bayou City has been consistently trying to combat racial discrimination for at least two decades. One of the leaders, Carlton James, has been directly involved in civil rights activities in this community since 1945-46, and at least two other leaders, Amos Aldrich and Doremus Dorsey, have been involved for almost the same period of time. Fr. McKnight has been involved in civil rights movements since he arrived in Bayou City more than fourteen years ago. Rita Thibodeaux and Joseph Francis have been directly involved since 1960.

Continuity of leadership has been acquired in another way in Bayou City. The older, more established leaders such as Carlton James and Fr. Albert McKnight have been largely responsible for the recruitment and training of some of the younger leaders, including Albert Malveaux, Charles Prejean, Vincent Coco, and Paul Taylor.[15] It is

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[15]The Negro leadership in this community is relatively young. Their ages range from twenty-six to sixty-seven with the average being 42.2 years. Only 33.3 per cent of those interviewed are above the age of fifty. It might be pointed out that three of the five individuals who are above the age of fifty are members of the Auditorium Committee. These are Joseph Francis, Rita Thibodeaux, and Doremus Dorsey. Some of the younger leaders consider these individuals to be more conservative than most leaders. None

reasonable to assume that the younger leaders have been influenced by the older leaders and at the same time the older leaders have been influenced by the younger leaders. Consequently, Bayou City has not experienced any abrupt changes in the Negro leadership structure. Certainly the leadership structure has undergone some alteration, but these developments have occurred over an extended period of time, thus portraying a greater degree of unity within the Negro leadership. It might also be mentioned that because of the continuity of Negro leadership, sharp factions of Negro leaders have not developed. Consequently white officials have rarely had the opportunity to use divisions within the Negro leadership to their advantage.

The final factor hypothesized to contribute to the peaceful resolution of racial conflict was the availability of organizations through which the leadership can function.

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of the individuals below the age of fifty serves on this committee. This is not to suggest, however, that age is directly correlated with "conservatism" in civil rights although age may well be a factor. It appears as though those leaders who are reputed to be conservative are the Negro leaders who are accorded greater recognition by the public officials. This is similar to Thompson's finding in New Orleans that conservatism is due less to age than to whether or not an individual is given recognition by white leaders and officials. See Daniel Thompson, op. cit., pp. 27-28.

The white leadership group is also relatively young. Their ages range from thirty to seventy-four years with the average being 42.6 years. Only two individuals interviewed (or 14.3 per cent) were above the age of fifty. Of the total group of ten white leaders and four public officials six (or 42.85 per cent) were below the age of forty.

In Table 6 it was shown that the Negro leaders interviewed held memberships in eleven organizations concerned with civil rights. Each leader in the sample held membership in at least two of the organizations listed.

These organizations have been important to the Negro leaders in several ways. First, the very fact that portions of the Negro community have established formal organizations concerned with civil rights indicates that the Negro people of Bayou City are interested and willing to work in their own behalf. It also indicates, as David Truman notes, that a fairly high degree of interaction is present among the group members and also that "the group has achieved a degree of cohesion sufficient for certain purposes. . . ."[16]

Secondly, the establishment of these formal organizations implies that the Negro residents of Bayou City intend to persist in their efforts to urge changes in the traditional pattern of race relations. "A degree of stability," Truman notes, "in a group pattern . . . usually precedes formal organization, and the regularization of such arrangements implies the expectation that they will continue at least as persistently as the circumstances that give rise to the group."[17] And thirdly, the creation of these

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[16]David Truman, The Governmental Process (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1965), p. 112.

[17]Ibid., p. 113.

organizations indicates to the white officials that there is a leadership group to which the members of these organizations delegate authority to act on their behalf. As Truman points out, "Formal organization creates or recognizes various roles in a group, some of which involve more intimate and direct participation in the solution of the group's problems than do others."[18] As a result of these formal organizations, white officials and community leaders are aware of the fact that there are elements within the Negro community actively working to bring about changes in Bayou City. In addition to a Negro leadership, formal civil rights organizations implies that other members of the group are willing to perform vital functions such as providing the needed manpower to attack specific problems and the necessary personnel to obtain economic support for a specific cause. That the Negro members of these organizations were willing to provide the manpower to attack certain problems was demonstrated in the confrontation between city officials and Negro leaders over the extension of the city bus services. An attempt will be made in Chapter VI (Case Studies) to show that the support given to the Negro leaders involved in the dispute by the 140 members of one organization, Truman's People for Progress, was an important factor in the outcome of the confrontation. And the efforts

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[18] *Ibid.*, p. 140.

of the members of Southern Consumers Co-op to raise the necessary funds to finance the campaigns of the Negroes who sought public office in the November, 1967 elections in Bayou City demonstrates the willingness of group members to supply the personnel to obtain financial support for a specific cause.

In this chapter six factors hypothesized to contribute to the peaceful resolution of racial conflict have been considered. These factors are important in that their existence tends to augment the effectiveness of the Negro leadership. Attempts have been made to show that the Negro leadership in Bayou City is recognizable, significantly unified, has a strong association with the local minority population, is informed of civil rights tactics employed in other parts of the nation, possesses the quality of consistency, and has available organizations through which the leadership can function. The existence of these factors in Bayou City has improved the bargaining position of the Negro leadership and consequently has increased the possibility of peacefully resolving racial conflict.

CHAPTER IV

COMMUNICATION AS A FACTOR IN THE NONVIOLENT RESOLUTION OF RACIAL CONFLICT

In the preceding chapter, efforts were made to illustrate the importance of Negro leadership in the avoidance of racial conflict during periods of social change. In the present chapter, an attempt will be made to demonstrate the necessity for communication between group leaders in the avoidance of racial violence.

In Bayou City, the goals of the minority leadership were partially in conflict with the goals of the white decision-makers. All of the Negro leaders interviewed expressed a desire to have changes made in the traditional pattern of race relations. White decision-makers generally agreed that some changes were necessary but it was clear to this writer that they were not as anxious as Negro leaders to see these changes made. At the same time, all of the white officials expressed a desire to have no racial violence in their community. It would seem, then, that the white officials were confronted with the problem of deciding what changes must be made in order to preserve community peace. The Negro leaders, desiring to have changes made, were confronted with the problem of

demonstrating to the white officials the need for certain changes. If each group of leaders was to make progress toward its respective goals, certain information about the other group of leaders was needed. Hence, communication was an important factor to both groups of leaders. In the following pages attention will first be devoted to establishing whether or not communication between the groups of leaders has existed, and secondly to the manner in which these groups of leaders have communicated.

Three tests were employed in an attempt to establish the existence of communication. Although these tests may appear to be crude, this should not lessen the importance of establishing the existence of communication. As Karl Deutsch points out, "[t]he fact that social scientists may have to use some of the cruder rather than the more refined methods for measuring the amounts of stored or transmitted information should not obscure the importance of being able to measure it at all."[1]

The first test used, suggested in Deutsch's The Nerves of Government, was the frequency of face-to-face contacts.[2] Each leader interviewed was asked to indicate the extent of his contacts with members of the other group and the general nature of the topics of conversations that

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[1]Karl W. Deutsch, The Nerves of Government (New York: The Free Press, 1963), p. 149.

[2]Ibid., p. 177.

occur during contacts. The responses to this question are summarized in Table 9. The data obtained suggest that there has been considerable contact between the various leaders. Most of the contact occurred during an individual's work hours although some occurred during non-business hours as well. Over fifty-three per cent of the Negro respondents said they came into contact with persons of the other race very frequently while 71.4 per cent of the white respondents came into contact with Negroes very frequently during their business hours. Although there was not as much contact during non-business hours as during business hours, the extent of contact was considerable. The majority of leaders in both groups said they came into contact with members of the other race frequently.

Probably more important than simply contact are the general topics of conversations that occur during the periods of contact. The topics, of course, were varied but a large percentage of the sample of Negro and white leaders said civil rights often was the topic of conversation. Of the Negro respondents sixty per cent (or nine) said they discussed civil rights problems with members of the other race during their business hours while 86.6 per cent (or thirteen) said they discussed this topic during non-business hours. Of the white respondents 64.4 per cent (or nine) said they discussed civil rights with members of the Negro

TABLE 9

CONTACT BETWEEN GROUP LEADERS AND MEMBERS OF OTHER GROUPS

Extent of Contact	Negro Leaders	White Leaders
During Business Hours		
Very Frequently	53.3%	71.4%
Frequently	13.3	0.0
Occasionally	26.6	21.4
Seldom	6.6	7.1
Never	0.0	0.0
Total	99.8 (N=15)	99.9 (N=14)
During Non-Business Hours		
Very Frequently	26.6	28.5
Frequently	26.6	42.8
Occasionally	33.3	21.4
Seldom	13.3	7.1
Never	0.0	0.0
Total	99.8 (N=15)	99.8 (N=14)

community during business hours while the same percentage said they discussed this topic during non-business hours. Although data were not gathered as to the specific contents of these conversations, sufficient data were obtained to show that community leaders did exchange their respective ideas relating to civil rights in Bayou City and in the nation.

In a second test to determine whether or not communication existed in Bayou City, Negro and white respondents were asked to list the major problems which have existed in the past decade and the major problems now existing in the community. One of the most striking features of the summary of results (see table below) is the similarity in problems listed by leaders from the two groups. With only one exception the two sets of leaders were in substantial agreement about problems that existed in the past and those presently in existence. The majority of both groups of leaders thought that discrimination in hiring practices and the lack of available jobs were of extreme importance. However, very few of the leaders had any notion as to how these problems could be resolved. A considerable number of leaders also thought that the problem of school desegregation was of importance. As of 1966 the schools have been desegregated but not to the extent that most Negroes and some whites would like to see. As one

TABLE 10

PERCEPTIONS OF MAJOR PROBLEMS IN BAYOU CITY BY COMMUNITY LEADERS

Problems	Negro Leaders		White Leaders	
Problems in Past Decade				
Equal Job Opportunities	80.0%	(N=12)	85.7%	(N=12)
School Desegregation	73.3	(N=11)	64.2	(N= 9)
Public Facilities	66.6	(N=10)	35.7	(N= 5)
Church Desegregation	6.6	(N= 1)	28.7	(N= 4)
Housing	26.6	(N= 4)	28.7	(N= 4)
Problems At Present				
Equal Job Opportunities	73.3%	(N=11)	50.0%	(N=7)
Complete School Desegregation	53.3	(N= 8)	35.7	(N=5)
Housing	13.3	(N= 2)	14.2	(N=2)
Police Brutality	6.6	(N= 1)	7.1	(N=1)

public official put it, "There is no problem in sending Negroes to formerly all-white schools--the problem is in sending whites to formerly all-Negro schools." The problem with school desegregation--with complying fully with the orders of the federal courts--was perhaps best demonstrated by one incident which occurred during the period in which this research was conducted. The school board, in attempting to comply with the court's order to desegregate faculty as well as students, invited white teachers in the local school system to transfer to formerly all-Negro schools. Several of the teachers requested the transfer. One of these, upon viewing the facilities at the Negro high school, refused to accept the position on the grounds that the facilities at the school were far below standards and consequently returned to the formerly all-white school. This incident demonstrates the point that those individuals (teachers, students, and parents) with sincere motives who would like to help destroy some of the racial barriers are encouraged not to by the relatively low standards of the Negro schools as compared to the white schools. The problem, however, is at least recognized by both groups of leaders.

While most of the leaders did recognize these problems (i.e. job discrimination and school desegregation) not all were willing to admit that the problems were really pressing

--at least to the point where immediate solutions were needed. One public official pointed out, for example, that in the past "there have [sic] been resistance to hiring Negroes in certain areas such as executive positions." "But," he continued, "in skilled jobs there was very little discrimination." When asked if job discrimination was still a problem, he replied negatively. "The only problem I know is the agitators who don't seem to have any cause except to develop mistrust to further their own motives of which I'm not too sure what they are."

Another official, in response to the question of what problems have existed in the past decade in Bayou City, said "In view of the fact that there has [sic] been separate but equal recreational and other facilities, there have really been no problems." This same official, when asked if there are any major problems at the present in the city, replied "There are no major problems." Some moments later the following question was asked of the same official: "What do you think the Negro community wants most in terms of progress in civil rights?" He replied, "Better jobs and better educational facilities." He was obviously aware of the problems but did not think them important enough to be called major problems.

The same question stated above was asked of the remainder of the white sample in an effort to acquire

another measure of possible communication between Negro and white community leaders. The vast majority of Negro leaders (eighty per cent, or twelve) listed equal employment opportunities as the goal desired most by the Negro community. Slightly more than half (fifty-three per cent) of the same group of leaders also listed equal educational opportunities as one of the goals desired most by the minority community. The responses of the white leaders were somewhat similar to those of the Negro leaders. The majority of these leaders (85.7 per cent, or twelve) agreed that equal employment opportunities was indeed the goal desired most by the Negro community. However, only 22.2 per cent (or three) of the white leaders thought that equal educational opportunities was a goal desired most by the minority community.

As a third indication of whether or not communication existed in Bayou City, all of the Negro and white leaders interviewed were asked to rank (from most important to least important) several devices which possibly could be used in solving the community's problems. As the data summarized in Table 11 indicate, there again is substantial similarity in the rankings made by Negro and white respondents. A majority of both groups, for example, ranked negotiation as the most important device employed in Bayou City. Half of the white leaders as compared to 73.3

TABLE 11

PERCENTAGE OF NEGRO AND WHITE LEADERS RANKING POSSIBLE DEVICES TO BE USED IN SOLVING PROBLEMS

Rank in Importance	Devices							
	Negotiation		Courts		No Action		Violence	
	N	W	N	W	N	W	N	W
1st	73.3	64.2	26.6	35.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2nd	26.6	28.5	73.3	50.0	0.0	7.1	0.0	14.2
3rd	0.0	7.1	0.0	14.2	60.0	35.7	40.0	42.8
4th	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	40.0	57.1	60.0	42.8
Total	99.9	99.8	99.9	99.9	100.0	99.9	100.0	99.8

N=Negro leaders
W=White leaders
Number of Negro leaders--15
Number of White leaders--14

per cent of the Negro leaders ranked the courts as the second most important device. The only significant difference between the rankings made by these two groups was that most of the Negro leaders (sixty per cent) ranked violence as the least important while most white leaders (57.1 per cent) ranked "No Action" as the least important device. Only 42.8 per cent of the white leaders felt that violence was the least important device to be used in Bayou City.[3] However, all of the white leaders in this poll who are public officials felt that violence was the least important device.

The results of the tests used do indicate that communication exists between the two groups of leaders. The white leadership appears to be aware of the goals desired by the Negro leadership, and the Negro leaders appears to be quite effective in taking advantage of the opportunities to present their views to the white leadership. In the following pages an effort will be made to explain how this interchange of ideas has occurred in Bayou City.

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[3]The Spearman rank correlation coefficient was utilized to measure the significance of the rankings made by Negro and white leaders. In comparing the two groups with respect to possible devices which may be used in solving these problems, r_s was found to equal 1.0. In testing for the significance of the association, it was found that a r_s with a value of 1.0 is significant at the .05 level. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected and the conclusion reached that there was a positive association between the rankings made by the two groups of leaders.

There are many ways in which groups may communicate with each other. In the case of racial groups involved in a struggle to change the existing patterns of race relations, the method of communication may range from the direct personal communication (e.g. one Negro leader personally communicating with one public official) to the more indirect type where the Negro leaders as a group may communicate with the city officials as a group by way of a third group of individuals. It may also range from the more peaceful "conference-table" type to the more dangerous ways in which a community may express its dissatisfactions for the existing pattern of race relations by actual violence. As will be shown, a variety of types has been used in Bayou City.

In his study of Regional City, Floyd Hunter explained the process of intergroup communication in the following manner:

> Some of the top leaders in the sub-community do have access to the elected officials of the city, and on one or two occasions within the past five years some of the more progressive candidates for public office have visited the sub-community leaders in their offices. These visits are described as stealthy. None of the other top policy leaders of the larger community have ever made personal visits to the private offices of the sub-community leaders, but some of the top leaders have entertained visits from delegations of Negro citizens in their own offices--sometimes at the request of the sub-community leaders and again upon invitation by the white leader. Such interchange of visits keeps the top leadership informed concerning

> sub-community opinion on selected issues, but the practice is considerably restricted and formal. There cannot be said to be a free flow of information in most situations affecting the sub-community and requiring policy decisions. Usually crisis situations are involved when the two groups meet.[4]

Intergroup communication in Regional City was highly sporadic and unstructured, but this is not the case in Bayou City. In the remaining portion of this chapter, an attempt will be made to show that communication has been consistent from approximately 1960 to the present and, during the same period of time, relatively structured.

Leaders of both groups employed a variety of methods to maintain intergroup communication, methods which have changed over the years. During the 1920's and 1930's there was almost no intergroup communication. Whatever communication existed between the few interested Negroes and the white officials of the city was in the form of personal contacts between a few sympathetic whites acting in behalf of the powerless Negro community and the white city officials. This small group consisted almost entirely of Catholic priests.

When the civil rights movement began after World War II this intermediary method of communication was largely abandoned. The veterans of the War formed an all-Negro organization, known as the Negro Business League,

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[4]Floyd Hunter, op. cit., pp. 128-129.

which was intended to be the voice of the Negro community and bridge the gap between the powerless Negro community and white public officials. Its formation represented, as one of the original founders pointed out, "the first sign that the Negro really would no longer sit quietly by and tolerate discrimination--that he would try to help himself." In seeking to realize these goals the Negro Business League was in fact performing the vital function of communication with the white community.

In addition to this organization, three other Negro organizations attempted to help realize the goals set forth by the Business League. Two of these, the Masons and the Elks, were mainly social organizations. The other, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, was entirely dedicated to civil rights activities. However, as one respondent noted, "the N.A.A.C.P. was not really a strong organization during those days." The vanguard of the civil rights movement during the 1940's and 1950's was the Negro Business League. Also during this period a group of sympathetic whites was still quite active, although for the most part it functioned outside of the Negro organizations. Although the accomplishments of all of these efforts were very few and pertained almost entirely to improvements within the Negro community as distinguished from breaking down racial barriers, they were

nevertheless important in the training of individuals who would be experienced in civil rights bargaining and the establishment of procedures which were to become very significant in civil rights bargaining during the late 1950's and 1960's. When the pace of the national civil rights movement increased in the late 1950's and 1960's many Negro communities, both North and South, were without established leaders who had the experience necessary to accommodate the peaceful social change called for in the new laws passed by Congress. In Bayou City, however, there was an established leadership group and the city already possessed the experience and the tools necessary to execute the few but significant changes ordered by the federal government.

In the early 1960's, Negro leaders in Bayou City began to urge city officials to eliminate additional racial barriers in the community. One of the specific goals of the Negro leaders was to make certain that Negroes could use the newly erected city auditorium on an equitable basis. The Negro leaders quickly acquired Mayor Bertrand's guarantee that the auditorium would be made available to all citizens of Bayou City, but to assure that the auditorium would be used for reasonable purposes, the Mayor appointed several Negroes (approximately ten) to serve as a screening committee for applications for the

use of this facility. Negroes found no difficulty whatsoever in using this facility whenever they requested. And, it might be added, the auditorium was open to everyone unless a private organization had rented it for a club function.

This operation worked so well that the Mayor granted additional authority to the committee to hear complaints from Bayou City's Negroes and to advise the Mayor on solutions to these problems. According to several respondents, the idea that this committee would function as a communication channel was excellent but the major difficulty was that the committee was not representative of the Negro community, and this became increasingly true in later years. According to these individuals, some members of the committee lost touch with the people they were supposed to be representing and certain members never were in touch with the Negro masses. Further, some of the members were much more interested in their own welfare than in the welfare of the Negro community. Specific instances were cited in which Negroes complained of one thing and members of the committee informed the Mayor of something different. The following example is indicative of opinions concerning the Auditorium Committee. In 1963 the Mayor was approached by two white leaders and asked that the city cooperate with Negro and white community leaders in desegregating all city

facilities. These individuals were informed by the Mayor that he would take this up with his Auditorium Committee to see if in fact this is what the Negro community wanted. According to one of the interviewees who had approached the Mayor, "About a week later the Mayor said that the Auditorium Committee told him they (the Negro community) needed such things as a street light on this corner, etc. . . ." The salient point is, of course, that the Auditorium Committee had grossly misrepresented the Negro community. Instead of informing Mayor Bertrand of the real desires of the Negro community, which were more and better jobs and desegregation of public facilities, the Auditorium Committee gave him the impression that Negroes were concerned only with improvements in public services such as street lights. The result of this and other similar events was a growing distrust, at least among Negro leaders, of the Auditorium Committee.

The committee is also considered by some persons to be ineffective from the point of view of the Mayor. Two reasons can be offered in support of this impression. First, the committee has not operated for the most part in the last year. This is not because there are no problems or because the Negro in Bayou City does not want to make official complaints. On the contrary, Bayou City has not experienced as much activity within the Negro community in

its history as it has in the past year. During the period in which this research was conducted several confrontations (peaceful discussions) occurred between city officials and Negro leaders. The Mayor was known to have attended, at the invitation of Negro leaders, meetings of civil rights organizations at which specific problems were discussed. Not once was the Auditorium Committee assembled for discussion although it is possible that certain individuals who belong to that committee may have been consulted.

The second reason given in support of the impression that the committee is no longer effective is that the Mayor recently has undertaken efforts to form an official bi-racial committee which will have, among other things, the functions formerly performed by the Auditorium Committee. Negro leaders appear unenthusiastic about the formation of this new committee, although some expressed hope that if and when it is formed it will be an effective communication channel and planning group rather than a "rubber-stamp" organization. The memory of the failures of the Auditorium Committee is too fresh in the minds of many leaders to place much hope in the planned bi-racial committee. There is little doubt that the bi-racial committee, if formed, can be of valuable assistance in maintaining racial peace in Bayou City. But the question is whether this racial peace will be achieved at the price of progress in civil rights.

This is the problem bothering many of the Negro leaders; consequently they are not willing to place too much confidence in the proposed committee.

During the period in which the Auditorium Committee functioned, another significant medium of communication was a group of liaison committees from various organizations concerned with civil rights. These committees, still very much active, are not highly structured--requiring only attendance for membership. They were formed, not as a result of a crisis situation but rather to discuss specific problems which may or may not have involved crisis situations. Thus, for example, a group of leaders representing a variety of organizations such as the Business League, the N.A.A.C.P., Council on Human Relations, Southern Consumers' Co-op., and others met periodically during the three months of the summer of 1967 to discuss the problem of job discrimination. While this series of meetings was conducted by certain leaders from the group mentioned above, the public was invited to attend. Certain officials, most notably the Mayor, were also invited. Out of these meetings came several concrete proposals which were presented to the city officials and to businessmen as well. A similar series of meetings was conducted dealing with political representation of the Negro community. Although the meetings were conducted by Fr. Albert McKnight, the

participants represented a host of organizations.

It must be emphasized that these are not merely discussion groups but planning and communicating groups as well. As a matter of fact, this form of communication has probably been the most effective from the point of view of the Negro. On more than one occasion during the summer of 1967 these committees formed and presented to the officials of the city groups of proposals which were designed to do away with existing problems. To cite one example, a group known as the Truman's People for Progress, which has members representing other organizations, met on several occasions to discuss certain problems which existed in a predominantly Negro neighborhood. Out of these meetings came proposals which were presented to the Mayor. This organization did communicate the demands of the Negro residents of this neighborhood to the Mayor (and acting Mayor) and later realized certain improvements in its district. These liaison committees have been and remain the best example of group unity and cooperation among Negro leaders. The in-group fighting, common in many communities in which there is a large number of civil rights organizations, does not exist among them.

Another medium of communication between white officials and Negro community leaders during the past decade was personal contact. The practice of meeting with key

officials on an individual basis became quite common particularly during the years of 1961-1966. The reason for this is not exactly known. Perhaps this practice grew out of a distrust of Negro organizations or perhaps out of doubt as to the effectiveness of Negro organizations. Whatever the reason, the practice was quite common until very recently. This method of communication is still used somewhat at the present but not as much as in previous years. Of the fifteen Negro respondents queried, one third said they still use the practice. All five of these individuals said they would not hesitate to call or meet personally with the Mayor or some other official in an attempt to solve a particular problem. However, most of the Negro respondents disliked the practice because it tends to give to the officials the impression that the Negro, regardless of how sincere his motives may be, is speaking only for himself--that he does not have the support of the Negro community. However, as some respondents noted, if a group of Negroes representing several major Negro or bi-racial organizations approached an official, it would appear more likely that the Negro community was behind the effort. Another reason given for disliking this form of communication is that it is too easy for an official to decieve an individual or, as one leader put it, "An official can promise anything and not fulfill his promise and then deny that he ever promised

anything." Supposedly, it is more difficult for an official to do this in a group situation. A third and perhaps more valid reason is that it is too easy to misrepresent the feelings of the Negro community if an individual takes it upon himself to act as the spokesman for that community. And finally, nine of the respondents believed that better proposals are more likely to be produced by group efforts than by individual efforts.

In short, the majority of respondents preferred to utilize liaison committees as a communication channel rather than the individual face-to-face form of communication. Of the Negro respondents polled, two-thirds said they met with officials only in a group situation. An additional 13.3 per cent (or two) said they preferred to meet with officials in group situations but that they also occasionally meet in individual face-to-face situations.

During this same period (late 1950's to the present) there has been one other method of communication--a third party acceptable to both groups. Originally it was hypothesized that the Catholic Church would perform the role of the third party in Bayou City. The data, however, do not support this hypothesis. In order to obtain information about the activities of the Catholic Church in civil rights, each respondent was asked if the Church had done anything to help avoid racial conflict and to help make progress in

civil rights in Bayou City. The vast majority of Negro leaders (eighty per cent) said the Church had done practically nothing to further progress in civil rights. Only twenty per cent said the Church had made some contributions but not enough. When the Negro leaders who gave negative responses to the question were asked the reason for their replies, a variety of answers was given. Charles Prejean said, "They [the Church leaders] have consistently waited for federal decrees to move so as not to antagonize their white parishoners--not because they are afraid of being hurt economically but because they are a product of the environment." Another Negro leader said the Church had not done anything because "The Bishop is conservative and paternalistic. The Church could play a great role because of its economic position within the community. The great hinderance is the present Bishop." And finally one leader, Robert Henderson, pointed out that "Individual priests act in response to their own conscience. There is no organized effort on the part of the Church to better race relations."

Surprisingly, a majority of all of the white leaders interviewed (64.2 per cent) also said the Church made no contributions to race relations in Bayou City. One priest said that "The Church has been the dominant force in the [Bayou City] area for over one hundred years. All the Church has done is to stabilize the poor condition of the

Negro. Rather than speak out for justice among human beings the Church has maintained the status quo with the result that the position of the Negro has been declining relative to the position of the white." Another priest related that "The Church has faintly echoed the position of the Catholic Church in civil rights." He believed that the Church had not done much more than this.

At least one priest defended the activities of the Church in civil rights. He felt that the Church, in addition to teaching the proper attitude whites should have toward Negroes, had made a number of specific contributions including periodic official sermons on racial justice, official desegregation of all churches, desegregation of Catholic schools, desegregation of Immaculata Seminary, desegregation of retreat houses, and the desegregation of the Catholic girls' college in a nearby city. This priest admitted that the Church could have done more, but asserted that it had done a great deal for which it had not been given credit by Negroes and whites.

The four priests in the sample were asked specifically if their actions in the area of civil rights represented the official Catholic position. All four stated that they acted as individual priests rather than as representatives of the official Church.

The finding in this study that the Church has not

played a significant role in civil rights in Bayou City is supported by the finding of another study of Bayou City conducted by William Osborne. In his study of the Catholic Church and civil rights which surveyed the activities of the Church in several dioceses in the nation, Mr. Osborne found that the Church in Bayou City had achieved some progress at the diocesan and deanery levels which encompasses the lay and clergy officials within the Church. Mr. Osborne noted some of the areas in which "integration" may be observed.

> Meetings of parochial school teachers have for the past 15 years been mixed affairs, with no distinction in seating arrangements or even in the serving of meals. Negro Catholics recall in glowing terms the formal dinner and reception for Bishop Schexnayder on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of his elevation to the see; the same receptionists greeted white and Negro guests without slight or offense to either. Seating was by individual preference, and although most of the Negroes tended to gravitate toward tables occupied by other Negroes, there was mixing at many other tables. Diocesan meetings of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (a clerical-directed but lay-staffed group which among other activities teaches religion to children in public schools) are likewise integrated. Diocesan sodalities and youth organizations, as well as competition in music and oratory, once totally segregated, are now conducted on a bi-racial basis. Marriage preparation courses on the deanery level (a deanery is a subsidiary unit of the diocese grouping several parishes in the same area) are attended by engaged couples of both races, and at deanery parades held on the feast of Christ the King the parish contingents line up in alphabetical order; Negro parishoners are not expected, as they have been in other places, to 'march behind the elephants.' The religious ceremonies at such affairs are conducted by priests of both races.

> Thus there is evidence at the deanery and diocesan levels of a considerable degree of desegregation or integration. How soon this will carry over to other areas of Catholic activity remains to be seen.[5]

Mr. Osborne found, however, that the Church had not made much progress in areas such as integration of Catholic elementary and secondary schools, equitable use of Catholic hospital facilities, and assignments of priests within the diocese without regard to race.[6]

Instead of the Catholic Church performing the role of the third neutral party, this activity was undertaken by a group of white persons associated with the local university. Most of these people are members of the faculty but two are not. Similar to the method previously discussed, this method of negotiation has not been used frequently in recent times, but in the period from 1960 to 1965 this was perhaps the most effective form of communication. During this period Negro leaders representing various organizations were not sufficiently united to present a unified front to the local white officials. Many of their efforts were highly disorganized and inconsistent. This group associated with the university took it upon itself to act as a liaison between the Negro leadership and

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[5]William Osborne, The Segregated Covenant (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967), pp. 50-51.

[6]Ibid., pp. 51-60.

the white community leaders. The titular head of this group, who at that time was a Professor of Chemistry and now is the Dean of the Graduate College, helped to organize the Negro leadership into an effective force. In the meantime, he and his associates mediated several disputes between the two communities. It was partly through their efforts, for example, that the desegregation of the lunch counters in Bayou City occurred without a single incidence of violence. It might also be added that this was not an isolated event. On several occasions these individuals have found themselves mediating disputes between the two communities. They have also been involved in the desegregation of the local golf course, the establishment of a Diocesan Council which was designed to handle racial problems in the Catholic Church, and the desegregation of the city's park facilities. In each case the objectives of the Negro community were partially achieved without a single act of physical violence. It was due largely to the efforts of this third group that such things could be accomplished in a nonviolent manner. Although this group is still functioning, the frequency of its involvement in civil rights has declined in recent times. The function once performed by this group is now largely performed by the various liaison committees discussed in earlier pages.

This chapter was begun with the assumption that

communication is an important factor in race relations--communication both at the level of the masses and at the level of the community leaders. Again, while it was difficult to establish the extent of communication at the level of the masses due to the lack of concrete data, it was slightly less difficult in the case of the community leaders. In Chapter III it was noted that Negro and white leaders were aware of leaders in the opposite groups. In this chapter, an attempt was made to establish the extent to which the two groups of leaders similarly recognized the problems confronting the city and the possible devices which may be employed to solve those problems. It was shown that there was a common recognition of problems--that the white leadership was aware of the goals and dissatisfactions of the Negro community. These data do indicate that there is considerable communication between the two groups of community leaders.

CHAPTER V

INTERACTION OF GROUP LEADERS--TECHNIQUES EMPLOYED IN CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIONS

The use of various techniques by Negro leaders was also hypothesized to contribute to the peaceful resolution of racial conflict. More specifically, it was thought that the greater the variety of techniques utilized, the more likely conflict would be resolved without resourse to violence by either community. It is generally recognized by those acquainted with civil rights that certain problems are more likely to be solved by using certain techniques than by using other techniques. For example, the economic boycott may be one of the most effective techniques in attempting to get the owner of a small business place to hire Negroes, but this technique is not likely to be effective in attempting to desegregate a public school. In the case of the latter, a resort to the legal processes is likely to be the most effective course of action. Consequently, the Negro leadership should be aware of, and should utilize a variety of techniques in attempting to solve various problems. In this chapter, several major techniques, including voting, verbal protest, various forms

of physical protest, and economic reprisals[1] will be discussed and an attempt will be made to describe the extent to which they have been used in Bayou City.

The most legitimate weapon available (or at least potentially available) to the Negro is the vote. The Negro has been reminded constantly that the most effective way to change the status quo is through the normal political process. The faith in the potential effectiveness of this weapon was well expressed by Louis Lomax in his description of President Kennedy's attitude toward the vote:

> Shortly after his election President Kennedy let it be known that he considered the vote, particularly in the South, the key to Negro advancement. For the President, this was a logical conclusion; being as political as he is, Mr. Kennedy felt certain that elected officials --county, state and federal--would be less abusive toward Negroes once effective numbers of them began parading to the polls. John F. Kennedy is not naive; he knows that Negroes in the Deep South are systematically kept away from the polls by various legal devices and by fear.[2]

There is little doubt that the vote could be an effective tool in the bargaining process, but to be effective the Negro must not only possess the vote but vote as one group --that is, vote as a bloc. Negro leaders in the South are well acquainted with the potential effectiveness of bloc

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[1]See James Q. Wilson, "The Strategy of Protest: Problems of Negro Civic Action," Journal of Conflict Resolution, 5 (September, 1961), pp. 291-303.

[2]Louis E. Lomax, The Negro Revolt (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1962), p. 231.

voting. As Daniel Thompson pointed out in his study of Negro leaders in New Orleans, "All Negro leaders interviewed, including those primarily interested in politics, agree that about the only way Negro voters can significantly influence political affairs in the city is by bloc voting. Fear of the Negro bloc has been expressed by most white candidates."[3] While it cannot be argued that the vote, particularly the bloc vote, is not important it cannot be assumed that the vote will end racial discrimination. The fear of which Thompson wrote is not unique to white candidates. Many Southern whites are afraid of the Negro vote, and no doubt would not sit passively while Negroes elected their candidates to public office. In addressing his efforts to a description of what could occur as a result of an increase in numbers and unity of Negro voters, Samuel Lubell pointed out recently that:

> As more and more Negroes exercise the right of sufferage, and if they continue to vote as a bloc, white voters will unite against them. If political power is to be the deciding force, enough white resistance can be expected to check Negro advances to limits acceptable to whites.[4]

Uncer such circumstances the Negro vote would not be much more effective than it is at the present time. But assuming

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[3]Daniel Thompson, op. cit., p. 114.

[4]Samuel Lubell, White and Black: Test of a Nation (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1964), pp. 173-174.

that Negroes disregard this and continue their efforts to increase the number and unity of the Negro voters, then more opposition which will further separate the races is likely to arise. As Killian and Grigg put it:

> If Negroes do attempt to mass their power at the polls the results could be, of course, an increase in group cohesion and the growth of another type of antagonistic interaction with the white community. While this political conflict would be nonviolent, it still would emphasize the conflicting interests and the separate identifies of the two groups.[5]

The point that must be emphasized is that the vote is of no greater value than violence unless it is used in combination with other weapons.

Voting has not been an effective weapon to the Negroes of Bayou City for several reasons. First, there are not many Negroes registered to vote. As of April, 1967, Negroes comprised only 13.6 per cent of the total number of registered voters in the county (or 5,780 out of 41,580),[6] in spite of the fact that they make up approximately thirty per cent of the population. Second, according to some Negro respondents, Negroes do not vote as a group. Instead, Negroes generally vote for given candidates because those candidates once did a personal favor for them or for someone they know. Daniel Thompson found a similar situation

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[5]Lewis Killian and Charles Griggs, op. cit., p. 21.

[6]Figures for Negro-white registered voters in Bayou City alone were not available.

in New Orleans. According to Thompson, "The majority of Negroes who cast their votes for a given city or state politician did not do so because their votes were 'controlled' by some organization (that is, Negro political organizations). They voted the way they did mainly because the candidates had become well known for certain 'favors,' and they were regarded as the less rabid of the segregationists seeking office."[7] This is not surprising in view of several elections within the past two years in several parts of the South in which Negroes, who were in the majority in isolated counties, chose white candidates over Negro candidates for public office. The same sort of reasoning that Thompson found to exist in New Orleans more than likely would be found in these counties.

However, the Negro vote is sought in Bayou City by white candidates. Given a close contest, it is possible that Negroes could determine the outcome of an election if they vote as a group. Few candidates care to totally disregard any community when election time approaches, and consequently would not overlook the distant possibility that this particular election might be the one in which the Negro bloc vote materializes. To that extent the Negro vote is an effective force in Bayou City politics.

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[7]Daniel Thompson, op. cit., p. 115.

On the other hand, while the Negro vote is not disregarded as a weapon in the civil rights bargaining process, it cannot be said to be the major weapon. The significance of this weapon may possibly be realized in the future; a new effort to increase the number of Negro voters and to unify these voters into a single voice has been undertaken by Fr. Albert McKnight. This is not the first time that such a feat has been attempted, but it is the first time that someone who commands the respect that McKnight does has made this attempt. From all indications, there is a good possibility that this campaign may be quite successful. If it is, and if the white voters do not retaliate by corresponding increases in number and unity, the power of the vote may indeed become a force with which to reckon.

Another weapon which has been used to some extent in various sections of the country and in Bayou City is verbal protest. Verbal protest includes such things as "issuing denunciatory statements, mounting a campaign of adverse publicity, submitting petitions and memorials, holding mass meetings, and sending deputations to confront the other party."[8] Under given conditions these are effective tools in the total bargaining process primarily because the other party to the bargaining process may prefer to make limited

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[8]James Q. Wilson, op. cit., p.293.

concessions rather than have a public campaign mounted against him. The actual use of weapons such as denunciatory public statements or campaigns of adverse publicity often can result in failure by making public officials (or other individuals involved) more adamant in their opposition. However, in future bargaining situations the memory of whatever damage occurred to officials as a result of these weapons of publicity may encourage them or others to make limited concessions. Verbal protests of various kinds can be effective in another way. Few city leaders cherish the thought of having the national or state news media focus upon activities within their communities. This is particularly true in more recent times when the media appear to have a special interest in Negro protest. Negro as well as white community leaders realize this. Experiences of other cities are obvious reminders to white officials that their communities could well become the subject of an evening news report. And judging from the statement of one official in Bayou City that "We just don't want the kind of recognition that other communities have received because of racial trouble," officials would prefer to try to settle disputes through peaceful negotiation. Again, these forms of verbal protest do not always render the desired results but, as one writer put it, "It is a

necessary and valuable part of a balanced strategic plan."[9]

Perhaps the best demonstration of the value of verbal protest is the now famous March on Washington in which over 200,000 persons gathered together in the nation's capital on August 23, 1963. The purposes of the protest were to remind the nation that certain changes were needed in the country and to specifically ask the Congress for a civil rights bill which would provide for penalties against states with anti-Negro laws, for desegregation of public schools and government-aided housing, for a government program to train unskilled workers, for an increase in the minimum wage and a statute against job discrimination.[10] The March was, of course, very effective in demonstrating the deep dissatisfactions of the Negro minority.

Vergal protest has not been utilized to any great extent by Negro leaders in Bayou City. Only recently has this weapon been used in more than isolated instances. Negro leaders found certain forms of verbal protest--particularly the holding of mass meetings and mounting campaigns of adverse publicity--to be of great value during the period in which this research was conducted. This protest was directed against the existence of certain

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[9]J. Milton Yinger, op. cit., p. 115.

[10]David Bowen, The Struggle Within: Race Relations in the United States (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1965), p. 70.

undesirable conditions in the city as well as against specific local officials who were seeking re-election to public office. More importantly, however, the protest was a new attempt by certain leaders to make the Negro community more politically aware and to mold the Negro voting community into an effective force to work against the re-election of certain officials. Although this weapon has not been of great value in the past (and this is due largely to the failure of the Negro leaders to employ it) it will possibly be of great significance in the future as the leaders of the Negro community acquire greater experience in the use of this technique.

One of the most effective weapons available to the American Negro in his quest for freedom is the economic boycott. In order for a boycott to be effective the Negro community must possess a sizeable percentage of the buying power at the particular establishment being pressured, and obtain unified participation by the Negro community. If the community cannot be organized sufficiently to guarantee widespread participation by members, the attempted boycott may prove to work in favor of the target establishment. Moreover, the action of Negro participants must not be so strong as to evoke counter-boycotts by the white community.[11]

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[11]See Leonard Broom and Nervel Glenn, Transformation of the Negro American (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1965), p. 70.

Even if all of the above are present this will not assure success in any given city. However, there have been a number of instances where boycotts have been employed with encouraging results. The following is one example.

> For instance, in 1960 some 400 Negro ministers in Philadelphia organized the 'Selective Patronage Movement' and through a series of successful boycotts forced firms to hire more Negroes. In the first year, the boycott was used against a dozen big companies--including Sun Oil, Gulf Oil, Tasty Baking, and Pepsi-Cola--and each yielded, Sun Oil after two and a half months but most of the others within a few days. About 600 Negroes were added to the payrolls of these companies, mainly in white-collar jobs. Through the cooperation of churches, lodges, and clubs, the boycott of Sun Oil products spread throughout Pennsylvania and sporadically up and down the East Coast from Boston to South Carolina.[12]

Negro leaders in Bayou City have not utilized the boycott in their campaign to abolish racial discrimination in the city. One attempt was made to boycott a beer distributing firm but this effort was not organized and was not confined to the immediate Bayou City area. The attempted boycott arose over the refusal of this distributing firm to hire Negroes in any capacity. There was no leadership group directing the efforts; Negroes simply stopped buying this particular brand of beer until the firm began employing Negroes. As best as can be detected, news of the

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[12] *Ibid.*, pp. 69-70.

attempted boycott was spread by word of mouth. It appears as though this effort was successful because the great majority of local Negro tavern and night club owners would not sell this brand of beer, and few Negroes would buy this beer in liquor stores. The distributing firm is now employing Negroes and the boycott appears to be ended. Although it is difficult to say whether the boycott was directly responsible for the change in hiring practices by the distributing firm, it does seem that it was a factor. From another standpoint, the boycott was a failure because it was not publicized. Several white leaders were asked about the boycott and none appeared to have any knowledge of the affair. It is reasonable to assume that the general white population also had no knowledge of the affair. Combined with the fact that successful boycotts in other parts of the country are not given much publicity by the national news media, the threat of the boycott is not a very effective weapon in Bayou City. Nevertheless, if the Negro leaders can organize the Negro community sufficiently to conduct a successful boycott against one of the local business firms which practices discrimination in hiring, the threat of a future boycott may become one of the more significant factors in the bargaining process.

One of the most important weapons and at the same time one of the most difficult to employ effectively is the

threat of actual physical violence. Although the object of community efforts is to avoid violence while still seeking to make progress in civil rights, the Negro community still must be able to muster enough power to require white leaders to negotiate.[13] The threat of violence or the fear that violence may occur can play a compelling role in bringing white leaders to the conference table. "White Americans may have to learn respect for Negro Americans as opponents before they can accept them as friends and equals.[14]

As has been noted previously, no violence has occurred in Bayou City. Leaders of both groups declared that they would not like to see their city torn by racial strife. Some Negro leaders expressed the view that they would even prefer no progress to violence. Others, particularly the younger leaders, said that they would resort to violence rather than have no progress. Fortunately, the Negro in Bayou City, at least for the present time, does not have to engage in violent acts in order for the threat of violence to be an effective weapon. The widespread attention given to riots in the past two years by the national news media has demonstrated in a convincing way that violence is not as remote as was once believed. "With their (Negroes') own

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[13]Lewis Killian and Charles Griggs, op. cit., p. 140.

[14]Ibid.

power they are confronting the power which has always sustained the status advantage of the white group."[15] Consequently white leaders in Bayou City appear to be willing to negotiate with Negro leaders rather than to have their city face a race riot. And judging from the record of the present city administration over the past five years, Bayou City will continue to resolve conflicts between the races across the conference table rather than in the streets.

The data presented in this chapter indicate that Negro leaders did not employ the variety of techniques that was expected. Thus far, Negro leaders have not been able to unite the Negro community into an effective voting bloc. Although these leaders have employed verbal protests and economic reprisals, the latter technique has been used only in isolated instances. In addition, Negro leaders have not specifically threatened physical violence although the public officials interviewed were aware of the possibility of an outbreak of violence. As expected, the major technique used in Bayou City was "conference-table" negotiation between Negro and white leaders. However, as was not expected, this technique was not reinforced by many other strategies. The only techniques that played significant roles in Bayou City are forms of verbal protest and fears of violence by white officials.

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[15] *Ibid.*, p. 135.

CHAPTER VI

INTERACTION OF GROUP LEADERS--
CASE STUDIES

Thus far in this study attention has been given to certain requirements which are hypothesized to be significant in the nonviolent resolution of racial conflict. These requirements have related to certain characteristics of the Negro leadership (such as degree of unity), to the existence of lines of communications between the two groups of leaders, and to the employment of varied techniques. In the present section an attempt will be made to establish the extent to which Negro leaders participate in the civil rights decision-making process and the effect, if any, this participation has upon the manner in which racial conflict is resolved. It was hypothesized that the greater the degree of participation in the civil rights decision-making process by Negro leaders the more likely racial conflict will be resolved in an atmosphere void of physical violence. The extent of participation will be determined largely by the role Negro leaders have played in certain key civil rights decisions. An attempt will be made to reconstruct certain decisions in the area of civil rights and to evaluate the role of the Negro leadership in effecting

such decisions.

In order to accomplish these objectives, several key civil rights decisions were selected for consideration. Originally, it was hoped that information relevant to these decisions would be obtainable from the local newspapers. Unfortunately, neither the daily nor the weekly newspapers contained any relevant information. Information about these decisions was obtained in extensive interviews with selected community leaders who played important roles in effecting the decision-making process. The decisions selected for consideration are desegregation of the lunch counters, desegregation of the swimming pool and park facilities, desegregation of the city owned golf course, and the decision to extend city transportation services to outlying Negro districts which previously had no such services.

The desegregation of the lunch counters occurred in 1963. The possibility of initiating lunch counter desegregation had, of course, been discussed for some time before Negro leaders actually made the attempt. Several Negroes within the community, particularly young students at the local university, proposed that the students simply stage a sit-in at several of the lunch counters to protest the segregated facilities. Others suggested that nothing be done until the white leaders of the community desegregated facilities in the downtown section. Out of

the many discussions and proposals, one plan which met with acceptance by everyone involved called for a meeting with Mayor Bertrand rather than with lunch counter owners so as to solicit the aid of the Mayor in the confrontation with the owners.

The first contact with the Mayor occurred in the spring of 1963 when Fr. O. A. Sigur and Dr. James Oliver, both connected with the local university, approached the Mayor with a plea that community leaders (Negro and white) work together toward complete desegregation of all city facilities and public accommodations. The Mayor was concerned and promised to take this matter up with the members of the Auditorium Committee to determine what the Negro community desired. A week later he informed Oliver and Sigur that his Committee had told him "that they (the Negro community) needed such things as a street light on this corner, etc. . . ." Oliver and Sigur then sought out young Negroes from the local university and the community to present the Negroes' case to the Mayor. After several meetings with these young Negroes and other Negro community leaders, specific grievances were selected to present to the Mayor. Another meeting was requested and granted. The meeting was attended by Oliver, Sigur, James, Clyde Coco, Kenneth Mouton, and Mary Jameson, all of whom were members of the Human Relations Council at the local university. At

this meeting Kenneth Mouton presented the list of grievances to the Mayor and again the Mayor expressed sympathetic concern. This list included a variety of facilities which the Negro community wanted to desegregate such as lunch counters, city parks, restaurants, motels, and movie houses. Although the Mayor appeared to be in substantial agreement with the goals of the Negro, he expressed serious doubts as to whether all of these things could be accomplished at once. The problem then became whether or not the Negro leaders would insist upon attacking all of these problems at once or whether they would compromise their position and work toward their goal in a piecemeal fashion. Realizing the improbability of accomplishing all of these immediately they decided to follow the Mayor's suggestion to attack the problems individually. The Mayor then asked for suggestions as to where the Negro community would like to begin. The committee suggested that the lunch counters might be the best starting point because the desegregation of the facility would be the most obvious to the people in the community. The Mayor agreed and promised his cooperation. He informed the committee that he would urge lunch counter operators to "go along" but that his position did not allow him to demand that these operators cooperate.

Some days later the mayor met with the local lunch counter operators and advised them to cooperate so as to

avoid possible trouble which may result from sit-ins at the counters. Most of the operators were willing to cooperate although some of them who managed only one of several chain stores hesitated until they could get directives from the home offices of their respective companies. At approximately the same time the Mayor requested a meeting with the Auditorium Committee to hear specific suggestions as to how the initial desegregation could best be achieved. Suggestions were also obtained from some of the lunch counter operators. The operators requested that Oliver serve as a liaison between operators and the Mayor's committee of Negro leaders. Oliver agreed and after several meetings with both groups a plan of action was formulated. The plan was that on a given time and day a small number of Negroes would appear at selected lunch counters and ask to be served. The employees working at the lunch counters would, of course, comply. The plan further called for gradually increasing the frequency of the visits to the counters by Negroes until the general white population simply became accustomed to sharing dining facilities with Negroes. The plan also called for the Mayor to meet with the local news media to request that they not give advance notice that the counters would be desegregated and not to "play up the story too much once it happened." The Mayor also assigned plain-clothed police officers at

each lunch counter which was to be desegregated in the event that trouble should erupt. However, no incidents took place. According to Oliver, "the plan worked perfectly--not one incident occurred."

In this particular case local leaders came together peacefully to bring about limited changes in life so as to avoid the possible trouble that other cities suffered as a result of sit-ins. Here, as in other cases, meaningful negotiations were chosen over possible violence to accomplish a very limited goal of the Negro community.

Another concern of Negroes in Bayou City has been the segregated recreational facilities--particularly the swimming pools and parks. Originally, the Negroes attempted to acquire their own recreational facilities. In 1951, when the city was in the process of planning a new swimming pool which was to be available only to the white community, several Negro representatives approached the city administration and complained of the fact that a new pool was being constructed with public tax money, part of which came from the Negro community, and yet would not be open to Negroes. The city administrators thereupon began planning another pool which would be available only to Negroes. In the early part of 1964, Negro leaders began discussing the prospects of desegregating the city's swimming facilities as well as other park facilities. The main force behind the

discussions again was the group of students, some community leaders (particularly Carlton James and Dr. R. B. Jones), and Dr. James Oliver and Fr. A. O. Sigur. Unlike the desegregation of the lunch counters, neither this group nor any other met with any of the city officials. Carlton James, one of the respondents who participated in many of the discussions concerned with the swimming pool, did mention that the group had every intention of meeting with Mayor Bertrand but that the Mayor acted before the group requested such a meeting. The Mayor knew that the segregated swimming facilities would be the next target of Negro efforts because Negro leaders had stated their dissatisfaction with the segregated pool in the list of grievances presented to him in 1963, and he also had heard from undisclosed sources that the Negro community was disturbed over the segregated pools and that Negro leaders were prepared to initiate a dialogue with the city concerning the pool. As a matter of fact, the Mayor commented further, several Negro youths had been seen walking around the pool (all-white) as though they were debating whether or not to try and enter. Such an attempt possibly would have led to trouble. In view of the situation the Mayor decided to take the initiative and desegregate the city pools. As the Mayor put it, "I simply instructed the pool officials that should Negroes come to the pool they were to be admitted.

No other arrangements were made."

It would seem from the above description that the Negro leadership was not significant in the above decision, that the desegregation of the city's swimming facilities was accomplished without aid from any other group except the city officials--in this case the Mayor. However, this is not the case. Although participation by the Negro leadership in this case was not as obvious as in the case of the lunch counters, it was present in that participation in the previous case influenced action in the present case prior to extensive involvement by Negro leaders. The city officials were well aware that the Negro community would soon become involved and they were also aware of the possibility that some Negro youths might attempt to use the facility before the city and Negro leaders could find a solution to the problem. As the Mayor himself pointed out, "We knew that eventually Negro youths would attempt to use the swimming pool." On the basis of this recognition, the city acted to avert possible violence from erupting in the community.

The next target selected by Negro leaders and white individuals associated with the local university was the city owned golf course. Unlike the swimming pool, there was only one golf course and this one was available only to whites. The public officials were first approached by

Dr. Oliver and then by several Negro leaders who approached the Mayor at a different time. The major participants involved (other than Dr. Oliver and several students from the university) were Dr. R. B. Jones (deceased), O. W. Gibbs (deceased), Wallace James (deceased), and Carlton James. These men requested that the city desegregate the city owned golf course, and again Mayor Bertrand was receptive to the idea but was fearful of possible adverse reactions from the white community. Consequently, he decided to wait for a short period of time until a plan of action was constructed in order to minimize the possibility of trouble that he thought might result from the desegregation. He requested that Dr. Jones coordinate the efforts to construct such a plan, and Jones then called together a committee of the Negro leaders to formulate and present the plan to the Mayor for his approval. The plan provided that Jones was to search for "good" Negro golfers so that the first Negroes who played would not hold up the game of any other players behind them, and that arrangements were made so that these Negro golfers would begin playing during week days when the golf course was reasonably free of much traffic. Thirdly, the Negro golfers would play consistently --two days a week for about six weeks. Then as time elapsed they were to play more often and on weekends when the course was fairly crowded. After this transitory period when

people who frequent the course became more or less accustomed to having this facility desegregated, Negroes could use the facility at will. As with the desegregation of the lunch counters, the golf course was desegregated without any adverse reaction from the general population. Commented the mayor, "There was not a single incident. Now the golf course is completely desegregated."

As with the other desegregation cases discussed, desegregation of the golf course occurred without violence of any kind. The decision came as a result of mild forms of verbal protest (series of mass meetings conducted over a period of approximately two months) and negotiations between Negro leaders and public officials.

In each of the above decisions the public officials of the city cooperated completely with Negro leaders in making limited changes within the city. In at least one case, however, these officials did not appear very cooperative. This involved the extension of city transportation services to an outlying sub-standard residential area occupied primarily by Negro citizens. The fact remains that there was much delay in making the decision and at some points there were some doubts as to whether the decision would be favorable to the Negro residents of this neighborhood. The original request to extend the transportation services to this neighborhood was made by a special

committee of Negro residents made up of members of Truman's People for Progress, an organization designed to be a task force to effect some changes in the living conditions of the Negroes living in sub-standard neighborhoods in Bayou City.

The need which prompted the selection of this group to meet with officials was that the residents of this neighborhood who were employed in the city proper (mostly maids and gardeners) had to walk over a mile to catch a bus to travel into the city and walk the same distance upon returning from work. The residents of the neighborhood met over several days at the urging of two individuals--Fr. Robert Prahinski and John Zippert (both white). After discussing how to word the grievance and how to present it to the city, twelve residents were selected to meet with the Mayor. The chairman of this group, Mervin Harmon, was the head of Truman's People for Progress as well as a member of the Business League. At that time, however, the Mayor was ill and was replaced by an acting-mayor who agreed to meet with the Negro representatives. After hearing the case presented, the acting mayor informed them that he could not grant their request. The representative then informed the acting mayor that the people of the area were highly disturbed and were prepared to attempt other means in order to accomplish their objectives. They also informed

the acting mayor that the residents of the neighborhood had organized themselves into a group so as to accomplish their goal by other means if necessary.

According to one respondent who participated in this affair, "The acting mayor thought we were bluffing. To satisfy his curiosity, he promised to come out to speak to us (the people who had supposedly formed the organization.)" Approximately one week later he came to the neighborhood to meet with the organization. He was somewhat surprised, according to this same respondent, to find that 140 members, most of whom were registered voters, were in attendance. The organizers did not hesitate to point out this fact to the officials. The case for extension was again presented to the acting mayor together with the reminder that Negro passengers comprised a large percentage (perhaps the majority) of the total number of persons riding the buses. The official agreed to take the matter up for consideration with the Mayor and the city transportation officials.

During this time other Negro leaders, particularly Carlton James and Mervin Harmon, had requested meetings with the Mayor to discuss not only this problem but the possibility of hiring Negro bus drivers as well. Two weeks after the meeting with the Truman's People for Progress group, the city officials announced the extension of bus services to several outlying areas, one of which was the

predominantly Negro neighborhood involved, and shortly after this the city also hired two Negro bus drivers.

There appear to be several possible reasons why the city officials finally complied with the request of the Negro residents and Negro leaders. First, they probably were trying to prevent a possible crisis which might have occurred as a result of failure to extend the bus service to this area. However, this would have required the recognition on the part of the officials that there was a possibility of violence--a thought not completely out of the question when it is realized that this was only one of a series of complaints by the residents of this neighborhood. Other complaints involved the stoppage of welfare checks for no obvious reasons, the failure of the city to provide adequate lighting in the neighborhood, and inadequate utility services. In general, there was increasing tension in the neighborhood and the residents associated this with the question of race. Whether the city could or could not grant all of the requests (some, such as street lights and an improved water system, were granted) because this was a "Negro" neighborhood is irrelevant in view of the fact that the Negro residents believed that race was the reason. Consequently, there appeared to be a distinct possibility of violence and apparently the officials recognized this.

A second possible reason why the city finally complied is that the Negroes appeared to be well on their way to an organization sufficient to take other action to achieve their goals--in this case, for example, a boycott of the bus lines which could have hurt the city economically. Since Negroes comprise the vast majority of bus passengers, an effective boycott would have meant a considerable loss to the city. And, more importantly, if the Negro community could unite for this purpose, it could well organize for other more significant objectives. This would not be a very comforting situation for white officials in the city.

A third possible reason is that the city officials feared the loss of the Negro vote in this neighborhood. While it must be realized that one hundred or more votes could not normally do very much damage to a candidate, the loss of the entire Negro vote might have serious consequences. The possibility that other Negroes in the city would give their support to the Negro residents of this neighborhood by voting with them against the administration could not be discounted. Whatever the reason(s), the Negro residents did manage to accomplish this limited objective. Again, it was achieved without violence although the possibility of some violence was not as remote in this case as it was in the others discussed above.

Several other decisions relating to civil rights have, of course, been made in Bayou City but the decisions discussed above were most significant. Others ranged from the decision to form an official bi-racial commission to the decision to hire Negroes in various city positions. None of these is insignificant from the point of view of the Negro community, but those discussed above were more significant and also representative of how civil rights decisions have been made in the past.

In terms of how civil rights decisions will be made in the future, there appears to be some doubt in the minds of the Negro respondents that peaceful negotiations will be as prevalent in the future as in the past. The problems that have been attacked were susceptible to solution via peaceful negotiation. The problems that must be confronted in the future may not be similarly solved. It is not as easy to deal, for example, with discrimination in hiring practices by private employers as it is with discrimination in hiring practices by state or local governments. Thus far, Negro leaders in Bayou City have not sought to acquire privileges that are not constitutionally theirs. It is possible that should these leaders seek privileges that have not been specifically granted by the federal or state governments, violence could erupt.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS

This study began with a discussion of those factors hypothesized to contribute to the nonviolent resolution of racial conflict in a local community. Throughout this study efforts have been made to establish the existence of these factors in Bayou City and to determine the effects they have had upon race relations in the sample community. The purpose of this section is to review briefly the findings of this study.

Most of the requirements relating to minority leadership were found to exist in this Southern community. To begin with, there was a readily identifiable minority leadership group in existence. However, this group was larger than expected. It was assumed that several individuals would be highly involved in efforts to destroy racial discrimination, but it was also assumed that one or two individuals would emerge as the top leaders in Bayou City. This was not found to be the case.

Although the minority leadership group was not as small as expected, it did possess the group unity which is essential if the Negro leadership is to be effective in confronting the white power structure. An attempt was made

to establish the degree of unity by utilizing three criteria--the extent of intragroup communication, the extent of agreement on the problems to be attacked, and the extent of agreement on the means to be employed for the realization of group goals. Observations indicate that the minority leadership group was substantially unified in its efforts to achieve progress.

It was also noted that the Negro leadership group is composed primarily of native sons. A majority (sixty per cent) of the fifteen leaders interviewed were natives of Bayou City, and of the six who were not born in Bayou City, only three were born outside of Deep South State. These six had spent an average of thirty-eight per cent of their lives in Bayou City, a sufficient time to be identified with the Negro population. The existence of a local leadership is important so as to overcome accusations that the local movement is run by "outside agitators," accusations that almost necessarily carry with them the implication that the local Negro population is not in sympathy with the goals of the "agitators," and consequently that there is no compelling reason why the white leadership should heed the demands of this group. Not once during the entire time in which these interviews were conducted did any white official or white community leader mention the term "outside agitators" with reference to Negro leaders.

There appears to be little doubt in the minds of these officials and community leaders that the Negro leaders are representative of the local Negro population.

The Negro leadership group also was found to be alert and informed. In one study reviewed in an earlier section it was noted that the absence of leaders from outside of the community deprived the Negro community of an informed leadership group.[1] This was not the case in Bayou City. Negro leaders seemed to have compensated for the absence of outside leaders. They have undertaken the burden of informing themselves by travelling to other parts of the nation for the specific purpose of learning new techniques and strategies. The acquisition of this information has had noticeable effects upon the conduct of the movement in Bayou City in recent times. One of the most significant effects is the new emphasis upon the utilization of the economic power of the Negro as a tool in the civil rights bargaining process. Under the direction of Fr. Albert McKnight, efforts have been made to consolidate the economic power of the minority community. The result of these efforts had been the formation of the Southern Consumers Cooperative which Negro leaders hope will soon become an effective force in Southwestern Deep South State.

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[1]Daniel Thompson, op. cit., p. 29.

Another important factor found to exist in Bayou City is consistency in leadership. Bayou City has not had the abrupt change in Negro leadership that other communities have experienced partially as a result of changes in the national Negro leadership. Some of the leaders at present are the same people who started the movement over twenty years ago. Most of the original group, of course, have died. Several of those who are alive, however, are still very much active. And what is more important, age appears not to have lessened their militancy. Consistency in leadership is maintained in another way. Leadership in the Negro community has a close relationship with membership in certain organizations, i.e. all leaders held membership in generally the same organizations. Some of these organizations have assumed the responsibility of recruiting and training new leaders. Older leaders such as Carlton James and Albert McKnight have been responsible for recruiting and training new potential leaders such as Charles Prejean and Albert Malveaux, to mention only two, and thus a gradual change in leadership has taken place in recent years. The suspicions by white officials that usually accompany changes in minority leadership tend to be fewer when such changes evolve over a period of time, and the younger leaders have had little difficulty in obtaining access to the local decision making structure.

It was also found that Negro leaders had at their disposal several organizations which could provide valuable assistance in attacking specific problems. In the decision to extend the city's transportation services to a predominately Negro neighborhood, for example, it was noted that while the main organization involved was Truman's People for Progress, leaders from another organization (James and Harmon representing the Business League) also became involved. In solving problems, leaders from different organizations cooperate. Together these organizations can provide the resources necessary to mount a campaign against a specific problem. Such alliances are not uncommon in civil rights campaigns. Often the groups involved will develop a common strategy in order to achieve a goal which is mutually beneficial.[2]

Contrary to what was hypothesized, Negro leaders have not employed a variety of techniques in attempting to solve problems in the community. They did use forms of verbal protest to reinforce peaceful negotiation, but other techniques such as voting and economic boycotts were not significantly utilized. And although public officials in Bayou City expressed an awareness of the possibility of the eruption of violence in the community if changes in civil rights were not made, there were no indications that

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[2]David Truman, op. cit., pp. 362-68.

Negro leaders had actually threatened violence.

The success of the Negro leadership in achieving progress was facilitated to some degree by the existence of several communication links. These links included a special committee appointed by the mayor, individual face-to-face contact, liaison committees composed of representatives of the various civil rights organizations, and a group of white persons associated with the local university. The existence of these communication links has resulted in a common recognition of the racial problems facing Bayou City by Negro and white leaders. White officials and other community leaders were well aware of the changes desired by the Negro community although they were not very anxious to see these changes come about. A common awareness of the problems confronting the community is essential if these problems are to be resolved prior to the outbreak of violence.

Also important for the nonviolent resolution of racial conflict is the involvement of the minority leadership in the civil rights decision-making process. Through an examination of several decisions relating to civil rights an attempt was made to demonstrate the extent of involvement of Negro leaders in Bayou City. It was shown that Negro leadership participation occurred largely at the initial stage of the decision-making process--that is,

policy recommendation. In one of the decisions (lunch counter desegregation) Negro leaders were asked to aid white operators in the task of formulating plans by which the specific goal could be accomplished with as little community friction as possible. In another decision (desegregation of the golf course) the sole responsibility of formulating plans to peacefully bring about certain changes was given to Negro leaders. In both cases elements of the minority leadership were given roles in the execution of policy decisions which had been initiated by the Negro leaders.

While Negro leaders have been, to a small degree, involved in the decision-making process, this involvement has not been institutionalized. That is to say, Negro leaders are not consulted as a matter of policy by city officials before decisions relating to civil rights are made. This was demonstrated in one of the decisions discussed above (desegregation of the swimming pool). To be sure, other decisions which have been of concern to the Negro community have been made and executed without prior consultation with Negro leaders. This lack of an institutionalized role in the civil rights decision-making process has disturbed some of the minority leaders and consequently some have been urging the mayor to fulfill his pledge to form an official bi-racial commission which would have a

role in the formation and execution of policies pertaining to civil rights. Whether such authority will in fact be given to this commission is unknown. Thus for the time being the minority leadership does not have an institutionalized role in the civil rights decision-making process and it appears doubtful that it will in the very near future.

Whether these are the only factors responsible for the manner in which racial problems have been resolved is open to question. Several of the respondents interviewed believed other factors heretofore not discussed have been of some importance. Over half of the twenty-nine individuals interviewed (58.6 per cent) mentioned the French-Catholic background of the people of this area as one factor. These men made a distinction between the roles of the "official" Church and the Catholic faith. Most of those interviewed were of the opinion that the official Church (the official administrators of the Church) has not played a very significant role in civil rights--that the Church has for the most part maintained a neutral position. However, it was believed that the Catholic faith has been a significant factor in the peaceful resolution of racial conflict, particularly if one viewed the Catholic faith as a part of the "Cajun culture" which is dominant in this geographical area. Apparently it is believed that the

Catholic faith has taught the population obedience to authority--authority which has been partially transferred to the government. One Catholic leader described it as follows: "They (the Catholic Cajuns) are somewhat used to following orders from the Church--Catholic priests were looked up to as leaders. They have transferred this obedience to the government." The implication was that since the city had a very acceptable administration (at least from the point of view of the Negro), which was willing to make advances in working toward racial justice, the general population was usually cooperative. However, it must be recognized that this could also work in the opposite way. If the city administration were opposed to changing the status quo it presumably would find the general population equally as cooperative. But this is not necessarily so. This can certainly be seen in towns within twenty miles of Bayou City. These communities are also predominantly Catholic-Cajun but, unlike Bayou City, have made little or no progress toward achieving racial justice. There is little doubt that Catholicism has been of some significance in resolving group conflict but its importance only in conjunction with the existence of other factors such as a strong and unified Negro leadership, reasonably extensive intergroup communication, and cooperative city officials.

Of the twenty-nine individuals interviewed, six (or 20.6 per cent) expressed the opinion that the successful desegregation of the local university has had a favorable effect upon race relations in the community. These persons point out that Negro and white young adults have been attending school together since 1955 without the occurrence of incidents. This has served as an example to the community that desegregation is possible without violence. And, others noted, some of the individuals who attended the university and have been graduated since 1955 are leaders within their respective communities; this presumably has greatly improved intergroup communication.

Only three persons (or 10.3 per cent) interviewed believed that cross-family ties between Negroes and whites are of some significance. The fact that there are some interracial blood ties, according to these persons, has greatly lessened the animosity between the races. Exactly how valid this is, of course, is almost impossible to say.

It has not been the purpose (or intention) of this study to portray a false picture of intergroup relations in this Southern community. Bayou City has made long and somewhat distinctive strides toward granting the minority its rightful place in the community, but there remain many problems within the community which must be resolved if the city is to maintain its record of racial harmony coupled with progress toward complete racial justice.

Negroes in Bayou City appear to be making progress toward their goal of racial equality. Thus far this power struggle has occurred without violence primarily because both groups have made certain compromises to avoid open conflict. Negro community leaders have not made demands totally unacceptable to the white community; they have been content until now to attack problems individually in order to keep conditions favorable for obtaining compromises from the white officials. Similarly, white officials have made compromises in the hope of avoiding outbreaks of violence. It is difficult to say whether or not disputes will continue to be resolved peacefully, in view of the fact that organized violence apparently is becoming an acceptable method of promoting change among Negro people.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What other persons not mentioned in this list are active in solving Bayou City's racial problems?

2. How old were you on your last birthday?

3. How long have you lived in Bayou City?

4. Where did you grow up?

5. Were you brought up mostly on a farm, in a town, or in a large city?

6. What was the last grade of school you completed?

7. What is your primary occupation (other than public office service)?

8. How much income did you and your family make altogether during the last year (before taxes)?

   a. below 5,000
   b. 5,000-7,000
   c. 7,500-10,000
   d. 10,000-15,000
   e. 15,000-above

9. Where do you now reside? (open country, rural non-farm, suburb, city)

10. What social or political organization do you belong to (other than Democratic or Republican Parties)?

11. What is your religious preference?

    a. Catholic
    b. Protestant
    c. Judaism
    d. other

12. Are racial problems ever discussed at your Church?

13. Would you say your minister believes that religion favors segregation or integration?

14. What has been the most significant racial problem in your opinion Bayou City has faced in the past 10 years?

15. How have these problems been solved? (courts, violence, negotiation, not solved)

16. What is the major civil rights problem now confronting Bayou City?

17. How will this problem likely be solved?

18. What do you think the Negro community wants most in terms of progress in civil rights?

19. How far do you think white governmental leaders are prepared to go in meeting the desires of Bayou City's Negro population?

20. How would you rank the four following items in terms of the most important problems facing Bayou City today? (1 = most important; 4 = least important)

    a. complete integration of schools
    b. equal job opportunities
    c. fair housing
    d. increase in number of Negroes employed in city

21. How would you rank the following devices in terms of solving the problems mentioned above (1 = most useful)

    a. courts
    b. violence
    c. negotiation
    d. no action

22. How do you obtain your information about the needs and desires of the Negro community in Bayou City? (for white leadership and church)

23. Do you dispense information to the Negro community?

24. How do you obtain your information about what Bayou City's city officials are doing in solving civil rights problems? (for Negro leadership)

25. How do city officials learn of the needs and desires of Bayou City's Negroes?

26. Why are race relations in Bayou City different from race relations in other parts of the South where race riots have occurred?

27. In the course of during your job how frequent do you come into contact with members of the other race?

    a. very frequently
    b. frequently
    c. occasionally
    d. seldom
    e. never

28. What are the subjects of your conversations?

29. During your non-business hours, how much do you come into contact with members of the other race?

    a. very frequently
    b. frequently
    c. occasionally
    d. seldom
    e. never

30. What are the subjects of your conversations?

31. What role has the Negro played in Bayou City in avoiding racial conflict?

32. Has the Catholic Church played a part in Bayou City's efforts to avoid racial conflict?

33. How would you assess the role of the Church?

34. What changes in the area of civil rights do you think will occur in Bayou City in the next five years?

35. What part will the Negro community play in these changes?

36. Will the Church play any part in these changes?

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